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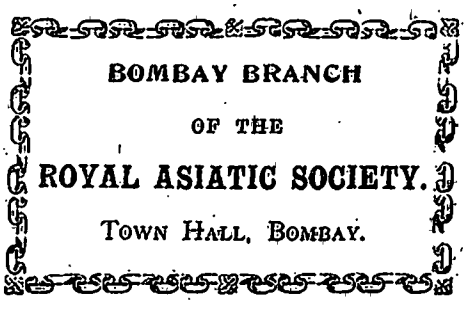

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THE

HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLES

OF

SCOTLAND,

CONTAINING

DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR SCENERY AND ANTIQUITIES,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

POLITICAL HISTORY AND ANCIENT MANNERS,

AND OF THE

ORIGIN, LANGUAGE, AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY, MUSIC, PRESENT CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE, &c. &c. &c.

FOUNDED ON A

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SERIES OF ANNUAL JOURNEYS BETWEEN THE YEARS 1811 AND 1821,

AND FORMING AN UNIVERSAL GUIDE TO THAT COUNTRY,

IN LETTERS TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

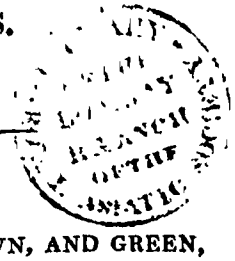
X 7

BY

JOHN MACCULLOCH, M.D. F.R.S. L.S. G.S.
&c. &c. &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.



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BARRA, VATERSA, SOUTH UIST.

If you are wearied of rocks and lochs and islands and waves, you must lay all the blame on the steam engine, not on your correspondent. I do not mean that this writing, replete with all manner of sapience and adventure, was written by a steam engine; though if mathematics and algebra can now be ground in a mill, and equations and logarithms bolted out like bran, I do not see why novels and travels, and much more, should not also be manufactured by a forty horse power: Swift's machine was not quite visionary. What I do mean is this; that as the essence of forty-horses, or of a whole regiment of cavalry, can, in these days, be comprised in a kettle and distilled, a man may now drive his ship and forty from Cantyre to St. Kilda, with the same facility as he formerly drove his gig and one to Loch Lomond; and that too, without paying for those ruinous Scottish turnpikes. Bishop Wilkins foresaw a day coming when a man was to call for his wings instead of his boots: but the Bishop did not foresee that, instead of ordering his wings to be put on, or his horses to be put to, the traveller will now shortly order the cook to boil his kettle. Such is the efficient and real cause of at least two of these very volumes: otherwise, I might as well have directed travellers to the mountains of the moon as to the mountains of Sky, and have described the islands and bays in the Mare hyperboreum lunare. But I see the day coming when, instead of Loch Cateran and Aberfoyle, it shall become the fashion to chase happi-

ness to North Rona and Barra Head; when the greasy thumbs that have just been contesting for cold fowl and Yorkshire ham, shall be leaving their marks on these pages, and when mates and cabin boys, weavers and tobacconists, shall be trying to spell those little grey Greek words, and wishing that Sir Walter Scott's letters were in gude broad Scotch. In time, the fire-teaser, or some other learned Sawney, shall condense us into a neat little pocket abridgment for the ladies and gentlemen who have taken their places on board the St. Kilda, Alister Mac Kettle, master, bound on a tour of pleasure to the Western Islands. Why should not all these events happen. Greenock can now circumnavigate Loch Lomond after breakfasting on its own herrings, and return at night to its own lime-punch. Ten years ago, it might as well have attempted to go to Gibraltar to breakfast. Our friend Staffa has even been obliged to put a lock and key on his island, lest it should be stolen; and its very existence was not known fifty years ago. I do not despair of seeing an Opera and a Royal Institution in Sky before long, and a Gaelic newspaper at Stornaway. Such is the apology for two volumes of seas and islands: and if indeed "non omnis moriar," if all the copies are not worn out before this prophecy is fulfilled, our joint fame shall be beginning to bud when I am food for fishes, and you for worms. It is the fate of him who goes first, to bear all: first through the ford. All the risk is his; the risk of not being cared for, the risk of not being read, the risk of not being understood, the risk of being abused. But he who braves must bear. The path of a book, like the way to Staffa, is smooth enough when it has been well trodden: and if the Serjeant who leads the forlorn hope comes off with his head, why then he is three chevrons less and an epaulette more. To cut matters short, imagine a

gale of wind, a head sea, two reefs in the mainsail, Barra on the lee bow, and last and best of all, Ottervore road.

On Eriska, there is a tower which has been a stronghold of the Mac Niels: though small, it is striking, from the scarcity of objects of art in this doleful country. We entered into conversation with some old people, who attempted to amuse us with tales, probably more interesting to them than to us. The ship that brought Prince Charles from France, first anchored in this harbour; and it was remembered with some feelings of hereditary pride, that he had landed on Eriska, where he found some women roasting shell-fish on a fire in the open air, and that he had partaken of their fare; thus commencing the career of that popularity which, as it continued to the end, must have been as much the result of good-nature as of policy. The opinion of a few old women in this wild place, could have been of as little value to him as that of the people in general after his project was overthrown and he had become a proscribed fugitive. Political feelings and opinions have however much changed on this subject, even within my memory. The few also who felt or inherited an attachment founded on family connexions, on ancient habits, or on imaginary national affections, have nearly vanished from the stage. If we yet meet a few persons in the remote Highlands who talk the talk of "sixty years since," it is but the repetition of what they have heard and read; sentiments which they have scarcely examined, and to which they attach no definite ideas. But enough of Eriska and ancient politics. Of the numerous other islands of this bay I need take no notice: and I may now make a general apology for the future omission of hundreds which, though I have examined them, afford remarks for none but a geologist.

Toland has given an absurd etymology for the name of Barra. It is evidently named after St. Bar, to whom the principal church is dedicated, and St. Bar was a bishop of Caithness; but it is imagined by the people, that some of the ecclesiastical buildings which remain here, if not all, were dedicated to St. Columba. It is impossible for me to decide a question of this nature between rival saints; but if you are anxious on the subject you may read the fifty-five folios of the Bollandists; where you will not find it. It is difficult to comprehend the nature of this establishment; as there are four independent buildings, collected, or rather huddled together, within one enclosure bearing the traces of a ditch outside; all of which appear to have been chapels. None of them are large; and one is not much bigger than a good sized chest; being only six feet by ten. They are utterly deficient in style or ornament; and therefore, in an architectural view, quite uninteresting; unless it may be thought otherwise, that the windows have inclined straight stones above, instead of the Gothic arch. It is probable that some of them have been votive buildings; as this was not an uncommon practice in the Islands, in the Roman Catholic ages. The burying ground contained some ancient tombs and a heap of unburied sculls; proving that the superstitions of the elder times are not fashionable in Barra.

This place, Kilbar, and its village, are built on a part of the island which is separated from the principal portion by a low sandy isthmus, over which the eastern and western seas nearly meet at high water. The larger southern division contains one rocky mountain of about 2000 feet high; which descends somewhat abruptly into Chisamil Bay, and declines to the north and east by a succession of lower hills terminating on the shores in

various rocky points that separate the small valleys in which the population is found. The land is sandy and of little value, even where it is susceptible of cultivation; while the rougher tracts are appropriated to the pasturage of black cattle. As to the commercial department of agriculture here, since the proprietor of the land buys the cattle of his tenants for exportation, there can be no competition of offers. It is easy to imagine why this ought not to be a very good plan for the sellers.

It is often a misfortune to the Highlanders, and particularly in these remote situations, that the communication by posts is frequently tedious and uncertain. With respect to this island, its letters are brought from Loch Maddy in North Uist, through Sky; so that two or three weeks may be occupied in the transit. On the west side of Sutherland, a great sheep farming country, the post office is, or was, at Tain, on the east side of the island, distant nearly eighty miles; and that, by roads which make the inconvenience three times as great. Thus speculators in kelp, wool, or cattle, have opportunities of profiting by the ignorance of the producers, who may thus remain uninformed of the fluctuations in the prices of their commodities. Where agriculture has remote commercial relations, as is here the case, the frequency of communication cannot be too great. Much has indeed been done for the improvement of the Highlands, in the matter of roads, ferries and ports; and, in general, it has been well and liberally done: while it is equally certain that it has produced effects which have repaid the advances, though the details of the benefits may not be always perceptible to those who look no further than to the immediate balance of expenditure and profit. That much might yet be done, and with further good consequences, is most obvious; and it surely cannot be doubted

that it is a just principle in a government to do for the general welfare, that which proprietors and inhabitants are unable, for want of means, to effect. In the same manner, it has itself an interest, in the shape of contingent advantages, in such improvements. It has been said, even in recent writings, very idly, that it is unjust to "tax the inhabitants of Middlesex," for the purpose of building bridges or making roads for the Highlanders. As well might it be argued that the salary of an English judge should be paid exclusively out of English revenue, or that a grant of money to the harbour of Ramsgate is a fraud on the Highlanders who pay taxes. But it is useless to dwell on an argument so utterly inconsiderate; the philosophy of those who see not beyond the length of their noses.

That agriculture in general is in no very flourishing state in this island, might be imagined from the use of the ristle plough; an ancient instrument carrying the coulter alone, and preceding that which contains the share. One circumstance relating to it, is, however, remarkable; namely, the superior cultivation of the farms in the possession of the Roman Catholic population. It is not the only instance where the Priests of that persuasion in Scotland, laudably interest themselves in the temporal prosperity of their flocks. This island affords one miserable instance, out of too many, of the evils arising from excessive population. The number of houses at Kilbar seemed to be about twenty, and the population should therefore be nearly a hundred; while this village was the refuge of those who had been unable to procure any land, after the island had been allotted. It is difficult to conceive how people do contrive to live without land in this country; nor, in fact, is it possible for them to do more than exist miserably. The men caught fish,

and the women and children were all employed at low water in digging cockles; but all the vegetable food they could have had to eke out this diet, was to be procured from an acre of land which the proprietor had given them from his own farm.

If I have represented the Highlanders as deficient in industry, I have also admitted that this fault is neither universal nor irremediable. It is not only just, but useful, to point out instances of activity; as it may lead those who despair of rousing this people to exertion, or who culpably neglect that duty, to make the attempt, instead of abandoning the pursuit as hopeless. If a Highland proprietor imagines that his tenant will not exert himself in draining or improving his farm, in cultivating his fishery or in working his quarries, it is certain that by importing Lowland, or foreign, tenants, fishermen, or labourers, he cuts off all hope from his people, and is not entitled to pronounce that an incorrigible state which is in a great measure fostered by his own impatience or want of exertion. I wish they would all recollect what has been said by one who has concealed much sound philosophy under the cap of folly: "Comme enfant nouvellement nay, les fault allaiter, bercer, esjouir, — espargner, restaurer, appuyer, asseurer." They are children; and kindness and care might do much for them. To say that the Highlanders are incapable of being roused to industry, is as injurious in its effects as it is untrue: it is often difficult; but time, patience, and method, will effect a great deal. It is those with whom this power lies, who are deserving of censure; not the critical traveller, who excites their anger, chiefly because he pricks their consciences; who merely *tells* useful truths, and who points out faults, only in the hope that they may be corrected.

The Barra men are among the most active and industrious fishermen in Scotland. They carry on an extensive ling fishery solely by their own exertions and on their own accounts; disposing, themselves, of the produce, at the Greenock market, to which they go in their fishing boats through the Crinan canal. They are thus comparatively wealthy; although, going quietly on in their old habits, their houses are no better than those of their neighbours. Their fishing boats alone indicate their superior wealth; being large and well found, compared with all those which are seen in the Western Islands. This is not exactly the best system that could be adopted; as the labour, which might be much better bestowed on the fishery, is expended in a tedious navigation, and as want of capital, both cramps them in laying up sufficient stores of salt, and leaves them at the mercy of the purchasers. How this system originated among these people in particular, or why it continues, I could not discover: but it is no less remarkable, that in South Uist and Benbecula, lying almost at their very doors, and possessing the same advantages, the people are noted for poverty, indolence, and neglect of the fisheries.

The construction of the Barra boats is very peculiar; and, like many others of the insular Highlanders, the boatmen are their own builders, purchasing the timber from the northern traders. They are of considerable size, so as easily to carry ten or twelve men, and extremely sharp, both fore and aft. They have no floor, but rise with an almost flat straight side, so that a transverse section somewhat resembles a wedge. Yet they are swift and safe; offering another example, in addition to the numerous ones already known, to prove in how many and in what apparently contrary ways, the objects of a shipbuilder may be attained. A seaman accustomed to a

wall-sided boat is naturally surprised at their form; forgetting that in proportion as they heel to the breeze, their bearings are increased: while, from their lightness, they are as buoyant in a bad sea as a Norway skiff.

It is a draw-back on the merits of the Barra men, that they are addicted to the use of whisky; a propensity fostered by their great gains as much as by their mode of life. The ancient prowess of the Highlanders in this respect, is well known; and, like their ancestors, the Scythians, they were notorious for quarrelling over their cups. It was almost the inevitable consequence of a Highland compotation, to terminate in bloodshed. The reputation has descended, where the merit, such as it was, is lost. Some years are now past since a meeting of Highlanders would sit down to their whisky bottle, just as, in these degenerate days, we do to our port wine; and the quantity of this strong spirit which they could drink without apparent inconvenience, is incredible. The excuse for it still continues, when the means are gone. A damp climate is considered, not only a justification of the morning dram, but as the disease for which, whisky, whenever it can be got, is the only remedy. To say, however, that the Highlanders are addicted to drinking, is to make the mistake that has often been done, of forming a judgment of their present manners from books long since written. I have no doubt that, like the common people elsewhere, they would drink whisky could they get it; nor do I know why they should not seek that consolation which poets and philosophers have joined in praising. But in the present state of things, they are nearly as much cut off from the use of whisky as from that of Tokay. Greater vigilance on the part of the Excise has raised the price of illicit spirits nearly to that of the licensed, and it is no longer in their power to pro-

cure it. They are in fact a sober people; whether from necessity, I will not pretend to say; but I really believe that, as happens in the case of many other habits abandoned from compulsion, they would be far soberer than their English neighbours, even if they had the power of being otherwise. This is a natural consequence of their laudable economy and foresight; of the care they take of their families, and of the provision they are attentive to make for their rents, as for futurity. Exceptions there must be; but it is high praise to a Highlander that he does not, like his profligate neighbour of England, consume in riot and personal gratification that which is necessary for those who are dependent on him. These are among the real and solid merits which are overlooked by those who are fierce in the defence of idle and visionary ones. It is the fate of poor Donald to find least justice from his pretended friends; as is not uncommon. There is more ardent spirit drank in London alone than in all the Highlands collectively; and indeed a traveller like myself will often have occasion to lament, when wet and weary, that he cannot procure it, even in their inns. "Withers, Prynn, and Vicars," never drank "viler liquors" than is this common whisky, I must admit, as far as my own taste at least goes; but we do not wait to taste it on these occasions.

I was here amused with the distress of the people from the want of tobacco; the American war having raised its price beyond their means of purchase. The Highlanders are reputed to be very much addicted to its use; but this is just as true of tobacco as of whisky. They are doubtless very glad to get it, as are most idle people; but it is not often in their power to purchase it. It is indeed in snuff that their sole consumption, at any time, lies; nor do I recollect to have once seen a pipe in the country.

Here they had tried all manner of experiments, by roasting various plants, and thus manufacturing a sort of Barra blackguard. The root of the daisy was said to have produced the best substitute. It is instructive to consider the great economy as well as delicacy with which a Highlander uses a snuff-box: taking the precious powder out by means of a little spoon like a tooth-pick, and often by a pen or a quill. Donald is too well bred to put his fingers into your box; he would not have been reprimanded by a certain fastidious princess. Why the Highlanders should be so ravenous after snuff when they can so seldom get it, is a problem for philosophers. Why noses were made, if it was not for taking snuff, is a greater problem still; when, unlike pigs and beagles, we neither use them for hunting foxes or truffles. To hang spectacles on, says Cowper. To be pulled, says Paddy; not satisfied with this solution. But there are many nations possessed of this excrescence, who neither pull their neighbours' noses, nor put spectacles on their own. To say that they were made to smell, is obviously nonsense, and cannot be maintained without impeaching the beneficence of Nature, when we consider that the senses were given us for our enjoyment, and that, nine times out of ten, there are none but bad smells. The rose flowers one short month, but common sewers and the modern Athens are in season all the year round. Captain Hastie's nose indeed was made for snoring. But, excepting that collateral use, noses were made for snuff, and snuff for being taken by noses; and it is a gratitude we owe to Nature to take snuff accordingly. Besides, as civilized man is only distinguished from the savage by the number of his wants and his gratifications, it is a mark and a means of civilization. Besides numerous other reasons; which will be found in the sixth edition of this learned work.

This Long Island is a strange country. There is land, it is true, and water, for nature has but these two geographical elements, and therefore you might suppose that you could walk or ride over the one and swim or sail over the other. It would be impossible to make a greater mistake; for, hence at least to Harris, it is seldom either sea or good dry land. You may tread the crude consistence; but it must be, like Satan, half on foot, half flying. It is a country only fit for wild ducks; who "o'er bog, o'er steep, through strait, rough, dense or rare, with head, hands, wings, and feet pursuing their way," may perhaps contrive to see it all. You may perhaps ride a few yards, but in ten minutes you will have to flounder through a bog, or scramble over rocks, or you will find a firth or a loch to cross: it is too wide to swim, and there is no boat. If there should be one, there is a second sea, and a third, and a fourth; you land on an island instead of the main, or lose yourself in the labyrinth of inextricable chaos. The Gaelic proverb says well when it says, "It is not every day that Mac Niel mounts his horse." It could not be of less use in Venice.

On the southern part of Barra, there is a small town on an islet in a fresh-water lake, an ancient seat of the Mac Niels. After much toiling through sand and rocks, I arrived on the shores of Chisamil Bay, at a village ornamented with dried skate, having "a most ancient and fish-like smell," as this animal is preserved without salt, and is, in consequence, very delectable. Every one knows how a Highland house is built; but every one does not know the architecture of a Barra house. In these, the roof springs from the inner edge of the wall, instead of the outer; in order that all the rain may be caught by it and make its way among the stones; thus

preventing the inconvenience of "minute drops from off the eaves." All other points correspond; as is proper in architecture. We may say of them what Ovid does of the palace of Night and Erebus: "Janua quæ verso stridorem cardine reddat, Nulla domo tota:" the only door is a bundle of heath. As to the rest of the comparison, I fear it does not very well hold. The "solliciti canes" and the "sagacior anser" do their duty admirably here; as the one set barks at you before you are in sight, and continues to yelp long after you are out of smell, while the "anser" answers them, hissing like Megæra's snakes; the "vigil ales," the "feræ," the "pecudes," and the rest of the clanjamfray, joining in a concert with the "humanæ convicia linguæ," enough to rouse Nox and Erebus both. But I must not forget a principal part of the description; for here indeed the resemblance is perfect: "Nebulæ caligine mixtæ Exhalantur humo, dubiæque crepuscula lucis." It is probable that Ovid lived in a sort of Barra house during that philosophical retirement of which he so bitterly complains. If there is no chimney, and if a Highland hut is varnished with black pitch, that pitch is bistre, and the artist who has lost his colour box may use it for drawing. If it smokes at every crevice like a melon bed in heat, there is no want of chimney sweepers; or of a society for their suppression, which is still better. Thus the wise man extracts good from every thing. Besides, you can truly and mathematically draw round a Highland fire: round our own, we do it only by a figure of speech. And as a circle is the double of its half, like most other things, one Highland fire is as good as two. It is a hospitable fire also; because there is room for the pigs and the chickens and the three black collies: and it is further a genial fire, because it conduces to the laying of eggs: as all

good housewives know. Even the Cockneys need not affect to despise the Highlanders for their want of chimneys: the fashion is not very ancient in England. "Old men," says Hollinshed, who is a very good chronicle of the times if not a very brief one, "noticed the multitude of chimneys lately erected," "whereas, in their young days, there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish towns of the realm." The progress can be traced now in this country, just as it crept on in England; at least when things are left to take their natural course. The fire in the middle of the house is first transferred to the gable; a canopy with a chimney is next placed over it; those who formerly sat near the fire, then sit within the fire place; in progress of time, this is contracted so as to exclude them; and, lastly, this eventful history ends in Carron grates and Bath stoves and registers, in bright brass and brighter steel, the pride of housewives, the dread of chilly guests, and the torment of housemaids.

To compensate the artist, however, for the bistre within, though the roofs and the walls generally bear a plentiful crop of grass, corn, and weeds, which sounds picturesque enough, they offer no consolation for his drawings. No human art can possibly represent a Highland cottage so as to render it a picturesque object. If alone, it is a shapeless pile of stones and turf: if congregated into a town, that looks like a heap of dunghills or peat-stacks. Were it not for the occasional wreath of blue smoke, a southern traveller would never suspect their presence at a small distance. Hence the unfortunate artist in Highland landscape is deprived of the aid which is elsewhere afforded him by the infinite varieties of rural architecture; of the life and interest which human habitations bestow on a picture; and of that source

of contrast and scale of measurement which are afforded by a mixture of the petty works of man with the bold and wild features of Nature.

In Sutherland and some other parts of the country, the same roof sometimes covers the cattle and the owners both: as it did in ancient Egypt; as it did in the bright days of Rome, says Juvenal. The entrance is then generally through the cow-house, which is only separated from the dwelling by the well-known partition, the hallan. It is now more common, however, for these departments to be separated; and the house then consists generally of one room only. This is an evident improvement; particularly when the cows' tails are long, and given to whisking. In Isla, where I supped one evening, unwitting of such an event, by a single brush of this machine the grog was overset and the candle extinguished. As to the plenishing: but why describe it: it answers its purpose, and what more could ivory and damask do. He who knows what it is to have wandered among these wilds, wet, weary, hungry, perhaps hopeless of shelter, will hail with pleasure and gratitude the blackest bothy or shieling that, just emerging from behind some rock or green bank, barely marks its place by the light blue mist which is wafted from it before the evening breeze.

Chisamil castle is a fine object, compared to most of the Highland ancient residences; as it is of considerable extent and occupies a striking position on its insulated rock, which, to the great surprise of the people, contains a spring of fresh water, though surrounded by the sea: being the only spring, I believe, in all the Long Island. This very valuable possession to such a strong hold, is secured by masonry and covered by an arch. This castle lies about half a mile from the shore, and is

still tolerably entire; its extent being such as probably to accommodate not less than five hundred men; a considerable army in those days. The family of Mac Niel was one of the powerful Clans of the time, yet the size of this garrison is remarkable; as it was not usual to keep an army on foot when it could be levied in a few hours by sending round the acknowledged signal for gathering, the burnt and bloody stick, or fiery cross. Martin describes his difficulty in getting access to it, upwards of a century ago, owing to the illnature of the Constable, or Cockman, (Gokman) as he calls him; so that all the discipline of a fortress seems to have been preserved in these castles, even down to the late period at which he wrote.

Though Mac Niel is said to have been a tributary to the Lord of the Isles at one time, this Clan professes to be of Irish origin; which is probable, considering the absolute community which seems in former times to have existed between that country and the West Highlands; though that Irish origin is still Norwegian. He is the Nialson of the Sagas. It appears to have kept up a degree of state absolutely ludicrous, if we may trust to two tales, one of which at least is true. In Carstares's state papers, there is a letter from the Earl of Argyll, laughing at the formality and state with which an ambassador from that chief had presented to him a letter offering aid, "as if he had belonged to another kingdom." The other story relates to the wreck of a Spanish vessel which the gentlemen of the Clan had proposed to appropriate; and respecting which, when it was questioned what the King of Spain would say, the answer was that Mac Niel and His Majesty must settle that between themselves. If he was the thirty-sixth chief of his race in Queen Ann's time, as Achmar says, he had indeed something to boast of.

Chisamil castle consists of an irregular four-sided area within a high wall, containing many distinct buildings ranged along its sides which appear to have been the barracks. One of the angles is filled by a high and strong square tower, which must have been the keep; having no entrance from the ground, and only accessible at one door about half way up, the ascent to which is by a narrow outside staircase. In the opposite angle is a small tower which seems to have been the prison; as the situation of this castle rendered it impossible to have a dungeon under ground. The walls are embattled on one side, and provided with a covered way and loop-holes, so as to render the defence in that quarter very complete. It is altogether a work of more art than most of the Highland castles, and constructed on better principles. The keep is also flanked by a small circular defence; but the protection of the rest has been trusted to the strength of the masonry. The entrance to this castle is near one of the angles; and, near it, are the remains of a round enclosure, or basin, which was probably a place of security for the boats. There is no date on the building, nor could I discover when it was erected; but it cannot be very ancient.

It was with some difficulty we reached Vatersa, which is separated from Barra by a channel that is very narrow on the west side, and only deep enough for small boats. This island consists of two green hills, united by a low sandy bar where the opposite seas nearly meet. Indeed if the water did not perpetually supply fresh sand to replace what the wind carries off, it would very soon form two islands; nor would the tenant have much cause for surprise, if on getting up some morning, he should find that he required a boat to milk his cows. The whole island is in a state of perpetual revolution, from the alter-

nate accumulation and dispersion of sand-hills; which at least affords the pleasure of variety, in a territory where there is none else but what depends on the winds and weather. I had here an opportunity of imagining how life is passed in a remote island, without society or neighbours, and where people are born and die without ever troubling themselves to enquire whether the world contains any other countries than Vatersa and Barra. The amusement of the evening consisted in catching scallops for supper, milking the cows, and chasing rabbits; and this, I presume, is pretty nearly the usual round of occupation. The whole group of the southern islands is here seen from the southern part of the island, forming a maritime landscape which is sufficiently picturesque. They are all high, and some of them are single hills rising abruptly out of the water. They are inhabited by small tenants and fishermen; and, except a small quantity of grain cultivated by the people for their own use, are appropriated to the pasture of black cattle. Sheep, here as elsewhere in the remote islands, cannot be adopted, owing to the impossibility of transporting them far by sea. The highest of these islands seemed to range from 800 to 1000 feet; and Sandera, named rather more properly than Vatersa which contains no water, is covered on the west side with sand, to such a height as to look like a hill of snow. The other principal islands are Pabba, Muldonich, Mingala, and Bernera, which latter is the southernmost and is generally known by the name of Barra Head. These islands present a curious mixture of Scandinavian and Gaelic denominations; the four just mentioned being of Gaelic origin, while Sandera and Vatersa, with Fladda and Linga, have northern designations. Muldonich is named after St. Duncan, who has probably been a personage of considerable import-

ance, as Sunday is, in the Highlands, frequently known by the name of Di Donich, or Duncan's Day. We were promised a boat in the morning to visit all these islands, and I therefore went to bed full of hope. I had forgotten that I was in Highland land.

Morning came, and six; but breakfast did not come till ten. Then came the cows to be milked and the calves to be admired; for in these countries of blatant cattle, a calf is a much more important object than a child, and its nursing an affair of the purest affection. At length we arrived at the beach, and then the Laird recollected that, a few days before, his boat had been carried away by the tide and dashed to pieces; as he had forgotten to anchor or fasten her. But there was another boat on the island; we should probably find it; which we accordingly did. With unusual foresight, he had borrowed some oars the preceding evening; but they had been left on the beach within high water mark, and had floated off in search of the original boat. There was now a boat without oars; but what are these difficulties in a land so full of expedients. There were oars to be borrowed somewhere: they would be ready at twelve, or one, or two o'clock: we should not be many hours too late, and could only be benighted. I knew we should be benighted though we were to stay there a month; and the oars were sent for. We then however discovered that there were no men; our kind host having sent all his people to Barra. But there was an expedient ready for this also; and another messenger was despatched to borrow four of the islanders. The borrowed oars of one fisherman were at length fitted to the borrowed boat of another: but when the second messenger returned, all the islanders were absent making kelp. It remained to find another expedient; and that was, to return to Barra.

Need you wonder now how happily people can live in the Highlands, how easily they can find employment, even in such solitudes as this, and how little time can hang heavy on those hands that have found so many expedients for occupying it. In fact, Time does not enter into the list of their categories. It is never present, but always past or to come: what a delicious illustration for Harris's Hermes. It is always too soon to do any thing, until it is too late: and thus vanishes that period of weariness, and labour, and anxiety, and expectation, and disappointment which lies between the cradle and the grave.

I could not have lost much in point of pleasure or information; except the pleasure of boasting hereafter that I had visited the southernmost as well as the northernmost point of the Long Island. Many heroic acts indeed, are undertaken, and performed too, from as worthy motives every day. Moralists, since it is their trade to moralize, laugh at mankind for despising what is in their reach. But mankind here, is more in the right than the moralists: the main object is, to overcome: and that which is attainable becomes therefore as important as if it were attained.

But I must end the history of this barren expedition, with an account of the fashions of these islands in the article of marriage: not under the New Act however, be it remarked. The Fathers say that the intention of marriage is to propagate the Church. But the Mac Niels maintained that it was to propagate the Clan. When a tenant's wife died, he applied to the Chief for a new one, on the ground that he had become useless, and that the deficiency was a public loss. Mac Niel then sent him a wife, and they were married over a bottle of whisky. This would have satisfied Marshal Saxe; who, viewing men, probably, much as Mac Niel did, seems to have been

alarmed in his latter days lest he should not have enough to kill; if we may judge from his Essay on Population, where the old soldier seems not a little out of his element.

South Uist (West) is a large island, being twenty miles long and nine wide where it is broadest. It is an epitome of all the rest; a strange collection of sands, bogs, lakes, mountains, sea lochs, and islands. The western shore is flat, sandy, and arable, and nothing can exceed the dreariness of its appearance after the crops have been removed. That is followed by a boggy, brown tract of flats and low hills interspersed with lakes, which is again succeeded by high mountains; and these, descending to the sea on the east side, are intersected by inlets so covered with islands, that we are often at a loss to know whether land or water predominates.

The earliness of the harvest is a remarkable circumstance in all these islands, and, at first sight, somewhat unexpected; as the climate is as rainy as that of most of the inner islands, where it is a month or six weeks later. This may be attributed, in some measure, to the dry and calcareous nature of the soil; but I believe that it depends as much on another circumstance, which will equally explain the well-known forwardness of the harvest in Moray and on the east coast of Sutherland; a tract which, in the same manner, exceeds in earliness the districts further to the southward, and, in a very great degree, all those on the west coast. That to which I allude, is the greater proportion of light, or sunshine, which these districts, remote and differently situated as they are, enjoy, when compared with many other tracts in the different parts of Scotland just named. The immediate cause of this must be sought in the relative position of the mountains towards these places and in the direc-

tion of the prevailing winds, as these act jointly in causing the detention of clouds over a particular region. The great annual supply of clouds, as of rain, is from the west; and they are brought, of course, by the predominant western winds. The westernmost land, which forms this insular tract, is too low and narrow to arrest their flight; whence they pass freely over all the outer chain except Harris; which, by detaining them, becomes an exception to the rest of the Long Island, being a dark, rainy, and late country. But as they arrive at the inner islands and the mainland, they are stopped, partly by the high lands of Sky and Mull, but still more by the great western mountainous tract of the Highlands; producing a dense and dark atmosphere through which the sun seldom shines, even for a few days, without long and frequent interruptions. An undue proportion of rain is a necessary consequence; and that, of course, aggravates the evil, although it must not be considered the sole cause. In that rain the clouds are partly dissipated, as they also seem to be by being redissolved in the air; and thus the eastern districts enjoy continuous sunshine, often for weeks, when the western are wrapt in gloom. If this view is correct, a register of light by means of a proper apparatus, ought to enter as much or even more than that of the barometer and thermometer, into the scientific means of estimating the nature of an agricultural climate.

From the high land above Loch Boisdale, it is easy to form a conception of the manner in which the islands are distributed along the eastern shore of this chain. The whole of this fine inlet is so covered with them that although they are sufficiently distinct when thus seen in a bird's eye view, it is impossible, when among them, to conjecture the extent of the water, and no less so to

distinguish one from the other, or to find the way through them. Loch Eynort is less remarkably diversified by islands; but it atones for this want by the intricacy of its shores, and by the numerous and strange creeks and recesses that are formed in it by points and headlands of all shapes and sizes. These headlands are often high and picturesque, and generally rocky; and the little bays and creeks which they produce, are no less beautiful than those sequestered valleys of the most various forms and dimensions, which lie between them and the declivities of the high mountains which tower above. Nothing is wanting but wood to render them every thing that could be desired; and it is impossible to contemplate without a feeling of regret, the treasures which nature has here, as in many other places, thrown away on a country and climate where they can never be converted either to ornament or use.

The highest mountain here is Hecla; but this Hecla is not a volcano, being a mass of that rock with the exquisite German name, gneiss, which forms the whole of the Long Island. I once made an attempt to ascend it; it was late in September, and I had forgotten that twilight was then short. Long before I had reached the summit, the sun set fiery red, and the whole atmosphere soon became covered with heavy leaden clouds. Matters began to look serious; and as the clouds gathered thicker and thicker and as the sun sank yet deeper below the horizon, the mountains and the sky became confounded in one mass of uncertain shadow. Shortly, nothing was to be seen but mysterious shapes of grey and black, and nothing to be heard but a low sullen roar that came by fits on the breeze, which was now fast rising and threatening a storm in addition to the other comforts of a dark night in a wild region of unknown mountains. In a few

minutes it became so dark that I could no longer see my way. How I reached the sea shore, I know not, and you do not care; nor, now, need I.

Loch Skiport is even more absurd than Loch Boisdale; being a mere labyrinth of islands, promontories, and water. It penetrates through to the west; changing its name to Loch Gamoslechan, so as to cut off a portion of South Uist from the remainder. Here there is almost a community of character and geography between South Uist and its next neighbour Benbecula; as they are only separated by a sandy bar over which a man may wade at low water, and as the smaller islands that skirt both are so intermixed, that it is doubtful if the two principal ones could ascertain their mutual boundaries and rights. This would form a glorious subject for a contest, whether of states or estates: for a suit in decisive gunpowder or interminable parchment. Fortunately, unfortunately for the lawyers, the whole confusion belongs alike to Clanranald. No one could wish for a fairer opportunity of tormenting his heirs and successors: but our friend is not a spirit of this cast.

Except a small half-ruined tower at the entrance of Loch Boisdale, I saw no antiquities in this island. In Martin's time it contained two churches and five chapels, but the people were then nearly all Catholics. Dean Monro gives a different enumeration of these. There are some of this persuasion here still; and this island indeed, together with Barra and Benbecula, may be considered as forming one of the chief divisions in the Highlands which still preserve the remains of the ancient worship. Canna and Egg, including a few individuals also in Muck and Rum, form the other principal seat of the Roman Catholics in the islands. The appointments of the Priests are very scanty: but they are remarked for their good con-

duct and attention to their charges, not only in matters of religion but in the ordinary concerns of life, as I noticed in speaking of Barra. A perfect harmony seems to subsist, as well among the people of the two persuasions, as between the Priests and the Presbyterian clergy; nor is it uncommon for the Catholic inhabitants to attend divine worship in the parish churches. I need scarcely say that, on neither part, are there any attempts at proselytism; while it is equally just to add that the Catholics do not voluntarily quit that persuasion in which they have been born and bred; standing, thus, equally removed from laxity and bigotry. It would have been well if the world had always acted like these worthy Highlanders; reflecting on the number and weight of the points on which all agree, and on the comparative insignificance of most of those on which any differ: we might sometimes do well to reflect on that yet; but not now, as this does not suit the present tone of our correspondence.

The modifications of credulity are amusing. In Martin's time, there was here a valley called Glenslyte, (and, of course, it is here still,) which was haunted by the "spirits of great men." Loud noises, as of these spirits in conversation, were heard in the air; and if any one entered this place without submitting himself to their will according to a set form, he became insane. Our narrator is extremely indignant that he could neither laugh nor persuade the people out of this belief, and is shocked at their credulity. This incredulous philosopher believes, at the same time, in the second sight, in pigmies, in brownies, and in elfshots and charms: he believes that a man's toe which was cut at the new moon, bleeds a drop at every corresponding one, that the well at Kilbar throws up the seeds of cockles, that a

man who was consulted as a barometer could prognosticate the weather by sneezing, and so on. He who has swallowed Micromegas might find room for Tom Thumb. Martin was not a man to have choked upon a ghost or two, more or less; but there is no arguing about tastes. De credulitate infidelium is matter of ancient remark; and were it not business much too grave for such rambling letters as these, I might draw comparisons (there are worse drawn every day) between Martin and the followers of Epicurus and Spinosa; philosophers of a credulity beyond all bounds, who receive without concern what is impossible or improbable, reserving their disbelief for that alone which they do not choose to believe: but I must not proceed.

Having arrived thus far, however, among the Islands, it is time to think of giving a sketch of their history, which, if very obscure, is not involved in such utter darkness as has been commonly supposed. Without it, I despair of rendering much of what is to follow intelligible; and if you find it long, you can only treat it like Polonius's beard.

HISTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLANDS.

THE history of the Highlands at large, is that of Scotland; and ill as it has been already elucidated by antiquaries and historians, its extent is such that I cannot pretend to enter into it. But it is that of the continental Highlands which belongs chiefly to Scottish history; and this is most particularly true of the central, eastern, and northern parts; always more intimately connected with the Scottish government than the maritime and insular tracts, undergoing considerable revolutions at various times from the interference of the Crown, and generally, in the periods of which we have any knowledge, held by a species of Feudal Barons, ostensibly, if not perfectly, dependent on it. The western part, either formed an independent kingdom, or was in the hands of chiefs, professing very little obedience and conducting themselves with much less than they professed. The history of the Western Islands therefore, to a certain period, is that of an independent government; and even when they ceased to form a separate feudal empire, that independence continued to be more or less perfect, from the difficulty which the crown of Scotland found in managing and controuling this portion of its dominions. Hence their history not only presents an interest distinct from that of mere Scottish history, but discloses the state and character of the people in a purer and more perfect manner than that of the continental Highlands. These last were frequently transferred in considerable portions to intruders from the low country, and at different periods: to Cumins, Gor-

dons, Murrays, and Stewarts; barons or chiefs, who remained feudatory, if that term may be used, to the government which had conferred on them these rewards of services, and who often extended by conquest or marriage or additional grants, or diminished or lost by forfeiture, the estates which they had thus acquired.

While it is an interesting and not a tedious fragment of history, it is therefore not difficult to give a sketch of the ancient political condition of the maritime and western portion of the Highlands, without much interference with Scottish history at large. Nor is it possible to avoid giving such a sketch. Besides that it is necessary for elucidating many points in the character and conduct of the ancient Highlanders, it exhibits them in a prouder attitude than in those parts where whole districts were subject to be transferred to strangers; since we here find them living, for a long series of ages, under their hereditary sovereigns, or under the branches which sprung from that stock, whose descendants, multiplied and divided as they now are, hold the very estates as subjects which they once governed as petty kings. There are also many things relating to the antiquities of this country, which cannot be understood without reference to that portion of history; and indeed, not to dwell on the various points which it assists in illustrating, you will have occasion to see hereafter on different occasions, that, without some sketch of this nature, many circumstances which I shall have occasion to mention, would scarcely be intelligible. As far as is possible, I intend to avoid such portions of the history of the continental Highlands as are peculiarly implicated with that of the Scottish crown; noticing only such few points as seem to be required for the same purposes that render the present brief view of the early Western Highland empire indispensable.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this is a very defective portion of history as well as a very obscure one, since it commences at a late period. It is nearly a blank down to 1060 or thereabouts: but thence to about 1260, is that portion of the Norwegian period which admits of illustration. From 1266 to 1306, the days of Bruce, it is again a blank; and it is not less so from his time down to 1423, the reign of James the first. Nor is it much more, thenceforwards to that of Mary: the very few transactions which Scottish history has recorded of these islands, appearing at wide intervals, and, when they do appear, explaining little. Neither is this history free from contradictions on which antiquaries and historians are still at variance, and on which mere authority or opinion is of no weight. Hailes, indeed, who has extricated so much of ancient Scottish history, an antiquary of a class of which it were well if there were more, seems to have given it up in despair. He says that the history of the Western Islands and of Orkney is involved in darkness, and that to investigate it would be a business of much time and labour. That there is a large portion of it which will now never be discovered, is certain; but that is no reason why we should not attempt to fill up that blank of about two centuries on which information can be procured, and which is the most important, as including the chief period of the settled Norwegian dominion of the Isles. How utterly this has been misapprehended, or forgotten, or misrepresented, by our historians, is well known; and how important it is, will soon appear. It is to be regretted that this able antiquary did not undertake it; and that he did not, is an additional excuse I for attempting to sketch the only blank which will probably ever be filled in this obscure portion of our history. As it is the history of Norway

more than it is that of Scotland, I must also remark that the facts are derived, chiefly, from the Chronicle of Mann, from Torfæus, from the Orkneyinga and other Sagas, the Ulster Annals, the Antiquitates Hiberniæ, and from the Flatey and Frisian manuscripts; some of which have been edited by Johnstone from the King of Denmark's and the Magnæan collections. Whatever slights may have been thrown on the history of Torfæus, on account of his recent date, that of a century only, it is proper to remark that many of the chronicles which he used and from which I have here also borrowed, are very ancient. The Wilkina Saga was compiled in 1250: and that this is not the earliest, by much, of their records, is proved by its mentioning the Nibelungen, which it quotes, as ancient. As to the history of Orkney, I have, as far as possible, endeavoured to avoid it, to prevent this sketch from extending to too great a length: but whoever shall attempt to complete it as a portion of Scottish history, must add this, and also make a greater use of Torfæus and the other Norwegian chronicles than I have done.

If there is not much in all these documents, before them there is scarcely any thing. It is little better than utter darkness; a gleam of lightning through the gloom: or, at best, a sort of Aurora borealis, flitting about and hanging out a false and wavering light. The whole of this history might indeed be worthless enough, if we had it. Unknown Celts, Irish pirates, Galwegian kings, Vikingr, Norwegian viceroys, Chiefs and Chieftains, sea fights and land fights, plundering burning and slaughter, usurpation and rebellion; such are the acts; and such are the actors, who walk in and out on the scene, like shadows in a show, we often know not why, or whence, or whither. Change the terms to Chactaws and Chickasaws and Chepewyans, and the same events no longer produce any

interest. But it is the history of ourselves; it has been that of Greece and Rome; and the day perhaps is to come, when future Mohawks, polished by mountains of statutes at large and acres of reviews, by horse racing and political economy, taylors and taxation, shall be as anxious about the deeds and genealogies of their ancestors, and when their anxiety shall be as unavailing.

But to begin, and according to the laudable custom, with Pytheas, and Pomponius Mela, and Pliny, and Solinus, and Ptolemy, all that we learn from them is, that they knew not even the number of the islands, much less their places, or names, or manners, or forms of government. Pliny makes them thirty, Ptolemy five. If the five Hæbudes of Solinus are indeed the Long Island, and that he is to be believed, then we must admit that this portion was under the government of one chief or prince. But when he tells us that this king is obliged to govern justly according to positive laws, that he has no property, that he is not even allowed a wife lest he should get children and heirs, and that therefore he borrows a wife occasionally from his subjects, we may as well claim the privilege of guessing for ourselves. There is very little use in conjecturing what else might have been in the time of the Romans; as they have not thought fit to tell us, and probably did not themselves take the trouble to enquire.

There is no want of fabulous history, indeed, among native writers, either during the period of the Roman presence in Britain, or before it, or for some centuries afterwards. But the Western Islands only partake of this in common with Ireland and Scotland; and I need not be at the trouble of abridging some of the dullest of absurd romances.

When Ritson, however, whom I always quote as the paragon of wrathful antiquaries, vents his indignation on

the forty kings of Scottish fable, he forgets Geoffrey of Monmouth and others, who have done as much for England. Possibly he believed also in Romulus, and Tarquin, and Numa, and Regulus, and Horatius Cocles, in a history of Rome when Rome had no historians for five hundred years, after, when it could not even write; in Mars, Venus, Egeria, and the Sabine Women: and in a republic founded by a chief of savage banditti, with a code of laws which Jeremy Bentham might have imitated. Scotland had its kings from Fergus the first to Fergus the second, just as the Phenicians had a regal succession for 30,000 years, or as Egypt had one for 11,000, or as, during this period, the sun had changed its rising from the east to the west four times. Still, we may allow him to abuse Buchanan, who lived at a day when he ought to have exercised some judgment on the misnamed history which he has made from such materials; and whose dexterity in satire or extraordinary talent in writing Latin verse, is no apology for his demerits as a historian.

I presume I need scarcely say, that down to the time of Alexander the third, the history of the Western Islands is also that of the Isle of Mann. This indeed was the seat of government; and hence, for a long time, nearly every thing that we know, emanates. Now if Jocelin's life of St. Patrick is authentic for so much, that Saint introduced Christianity into this island; superseding (what is far more doubtful) a monarchy coexisting with the Druidical hierarchy. But even the history of St. Patrick is apparently a fable: so that here again we are in doubt and darkness. So at least Ledwich, among others, is satisfied. The Isle of Mann is also supposed to have had a Danish king called Orry, about the beginning of the fifth century, or the tenth, for thus much does the tradition vary: and he is said to have laid the

foundation of a dynasty that was terminated by the conquest of Magnus, hereafter named. But this tale does not agree with the Norwegian and other chronicles; and, in spite of the assent of the judicious Camden, and of many of the credulous race of antiquaries, it is the safest, it is certainly at least the most convenient plan, to disbelieve the whole.

The first trace of a historical nature after this, but for which we have no other authority than the life of the Saint, is the present of Iona to St. Columba by Brude; supposed to be the Bridei of Innes's list. Yet this Brude is a doubtful personage; for, according to the Colbertine MS. the Brudes were Irish kings, reigning in Ireland and Albania for a period of one hundred and fifty years; the dynasty, which commences with Brude Bout, terminating with Brude Urmund. Thus, though the history of the Western Isles, independently of the Isle of Mann, commences in 565, it is far from certain that Iona belonged to the Pictish kingdom of Scotland. Whether that dominion ever extended through the Æbudæ, there is great reason to doubt; although that it did so, either then or afterwards, has been thought from the circumstance of Iona having been richly endowed by kings of Scotland, as Dean Monro assures us when he talks of thirteen islands then in the possession of that establishment. Yet his authority is worth very little; though Buchanan has idly given it currency. The Dean's kings may have been Highland chiefs: or it is as likely that they were some of the gentlemen who, on the same authority, are buried in Iona and are now flourishing in the gallery of Holyrood House. For some time from this date, the history of Iona is, in the same manner, the only one that we have of the Western Isles, and is comprised in the resumption of this grant by another king, Nectan, in 714,

in the first Danish invasion in 797, in a second in 801, a third in 805, and a fourth in 985; inroads in which, it is likely, Iona did not alone partake. So say the Irish chronicles: but Torfæus denies the whole statement, asserting that the first invasion was in 1210. Who is to be believed: for my part I am inclined to doubt Torfæus and to trust in the Irish Chronicles. There is abundant evidence in the early history of Ireland to justify their veracity; and it is probable that much of this confusion arises from there having been bands of pirates independent of the Norwegian government.

I can find nothing for nearly two centuries afterwards that is worthy of notice. Ireland was invaded by the Danes, sometimes annually, and sometimes at more considerable intervals, from this period to 1013, and even much further on; and it is not improbable that the Western Isles partook in most of these misfortunes. But the first event worth noticing, is about this period; and it proves that they were then under the Norwegian government. When Brian Boromhe attacked Dublin, the Isle of Mann and the Isles sent succours to the assistance of the Danes; but it is uncertain if these troops were concerned in the battle of Clontarf. Beyond this, the Irish take no notice of them down to the time of the expulsion of the Danes by Turlogh the grandson of Brian, and the banishment of their king, Godfrey, in 1075.

But the Chronicle of Mann says, that in consequence of a dispute with Olave, king of the Danes of Dublin, Godred Crovan, or Croban, (Chrouban, white handed) son of Harold the Black of Iceland, another claimant to this throne as it is called, retired to the Isles in 1042. Mann was then governed by another Godred, the son of Syric; and to him Crovan afterwards succeeded by dethroning his son Fingal in 1066. The period of Edward

the Confessor, with which this retirement of Godred coincides, may probably convey an idea of the general manners and habits of this people: it is not likely they were very different, since the state of civilization in Norway appears then to have been on a level with that of England. In 1065, not 875 as said by Dr. Macpherson, Harold Hardred, or Hardraade, commonly called Harfagre or fairhaired, had intended to reduce the Scottish isles, which had renounced his allegiance; whence it follows that these kings of Mann had been tributaries to Norway. But there are contradictions about this period, which it is impossible to reconcile. It is said by some that he sent an officer on this service, named Ketil, the Chronicle says Ingemund: who not only reduced them to their allegiance, but usurped the government himself; declaring his independence of Norway and rendering the inferior chiefs his own tributaries. But the truth seems to be that he was diverted from his design of going in person, by a project to attack Harold of England; the conquest of which country was also meditated at the same time by William. It appears that he first landed in the Isle of Mann, where he was joined by the King of the Isles, Godred Crovan, and that they proceeded to Northumberland in five hundred ships, where he was slain by Harold at the battle of Stanèford bridge, Tostig, the brother of Harold Hardred, being here also killed. If it is difficult to reconcile these and some other points, this circumstance is still important; as conveying, probably, a fair notion of the powers and general state of Harold and his people, which doubtless bore a considerable resemblance to those of the Gallic Normans, from whom they had not been very long separated, and with whom, it is said, there had been a joint understanding respecting the conquest of England. After the defeat at Staneford bridge, which

has been neglected by the English historians, in consequence of their being chiefly occupied on William's invasion, Olave, the son of Harold, was allowed to return with twenty ships, and landed in Orkney.

The chronology is here entangled: because, as this battle was fought on the 25th of September 1066, Godred's attack on the Isle of Mann, in which he suffered three defeats before he succeeded in dethroning Fingal, must have occupied but three months, including the time required for levying his forces, as the Chronicle says he did, in the Western Islands. The death of Godred Crovan took place in Isla, in 1082; and at this time the Hibernian Danes had become confined to Leinster. That the dominion of Godred included the Western Isles, and probably the whole, together with Orkney and Shetland, appears from Torfæus; who says that he was king of the Nordereys, and that his lieutenant in these, was Lagman, his son. He left two other sons, Harold and Olave; but Lagman seized the crown, and, on Harold's rebellion, his eyes were put out; a fashionable punishment or precaution in those days, and commonly accompanied by an additional one. Subsequently to this, however, he resigned his throne and made a pilgrimage of penitence to Jerusalem, where he afterwards died. Olave being then a minor, the Isles, in 1089, sent an embassy to Morlach the Danish king of Dublin, to request a king. Donald, his cousin, became thus promoted to the government; but proving a tyrant, he was expelled by his subjects after reigning three years.

In 1098, Olave king of Norway died; and as it is said that the King of the Isles, (this Donald we must presume, as no other king appears,) had renounced his allegiance, or rather, had forfeited that and his kingdom together, Magnus Berfætta or Berfættr (Barelegs), commonly called

Barefoot, the successor to the crown of Norway, undertook an expedition to recover the rights of his kingdom. He landed first in Orkney, with one hundred and fifty ships; in 1095, according to some authors, but according to others in 1097; the kingdom of the Isles being then in a state of anarchy and division. In Orkney, he first settled the disputes between Erlen the son of Thorfin and his nephew Haco, which belong to the history of Orkney, and then reduced to obedience, first Lewis, and afterwards, Uist, Sky, Mull, Isla, Cantyre, and Mann, ravaging also the coasts of Scotland and Ireland. Torfæus places the termination of this expedition in 1099; but the date of his arrival in Mann is said also to have been in 1098. I need scarcely say that many of the difficulties in this chronology, arise from the various methods of reckoning the year, as Hailes has remarked.

We here enter on Scottish history, and are somewhat troubled with that of Donald Bane, formerly noticed. Having fled to the Isles on the usurpation of Macbeth, he is said to have invaded Scotland, with the aid of the Norwegian power, at the death of his brother Malcolm; thus usurping a government, of which the legal line of heirs were minors. It has further been said that he delivered the islands up to Magnus, on condition of receiving his assistance on this occasion. This is not intelligible. He could not have possessed the islands, because the Scottish crown did not; and Magnus could not have made a compact with him to receive what was already his own. It is probable that the Scottish account is merely incorrect by exaggeration. Donald Bane might have acquired the friendship and assistance of Magnus, because it must have been the interest of the latter to foment rebellion and aid an usurper. This has been magnified for the honour of Scotland: as if it might

prove that she possessed the dominion of the Isles, which, from all that follows in their history, was plainly not the fact; even if the Norwegian and Mann chronicles were not worthy of superior credit in this case. Here also is told the tale of the circumnavigation of Cantyre, elsewhere noticed; which cannot be true since it was not in the possession of Donald Bane.

During the abode of Magnus in Mann, he relieved Anglesea from an attack on the part of William Rufus. In 1101, there is on record, a protection sent to him to meet Henry I in Wales for the purpose of joining him in the conquest of Ireland. It is not known if this meeting took place; but he was killed in a descent on Roscommon in 1103. Torfæus thinks that Magnus made four expeditions to the Isles: one in the time of Crovan, one in 1088, one in 1098, and the last in 1103; but other historians limit them to 1098 and 1103.

The death of Magnus, under whom Norway and the Isles had possessed but one king, left the throne of the latter vacant. Olave, the minor, and a son of Crovan, had in the mean time been residing at the court of Henry, and now became king of Mann and the Isles. It is necessary to remark this; because, like other events already noticed, it shows that this kingdom was considered of importance by the English kings; while it may also prove that, whatever was the information or education of that day, of which English history will inform us, the same was probably possessed by Olave, and by others, at this period. And there is abundant reason for supposing that the condition of the Western Isles was far superior, as a nation, during the Norwegian dynasty, to what it ever was afterwards. I had occasion formerly to notice the Norwegian manners of these ages, and we can also deduce some information from many different sources,

and among the rest, from the Life of St. Magnus, whose death is in 1110, even allowing somewhat for exaggeration. He is represented as dignified and generous, himself noted for correct morals, and studious in enforcing them; faithful to his friends, courageous in war and mild in peace. As a ruler he was assiduous, watchful, affable, and merciful; severe against thieves and pirates, and executing them without partiality, whether rich or poor. Even to his friends, the severity of his justice was impartial; esteeming the laws above all rank. In addition to all this, he was religious, bountiful to the rich, and charitable to the poor. At the English court, where he resided a twelvemonth, he was highly esteemed by the King, and beloved by all; returning with rich gifts and with Henry's warm friendship. It was under the Scottish government, and in the hands of the chiefs who followed the Norwegian secession, that they became that barbarous people which we afterwards know them during the contests of the Clans. It need scarcely be remarked that the Celts of the Isles and Cantyre had thus been long a conquered people under a foreign yoke; amalgamating however, it is probable, with their conquerors, if we can indeed grant them this; but, as being the majority in numbers, communicating to them their own language, as the French in Normandy and the Saxons in England, under similar circumstances, did successively to their Norman brethren.

Olave, the first of his name, married two wives: the first, a daughter either of the Earl of Caithness or the Earl of Orkney, who makes no figure in this history, and the second, Affrica the daughter of Fergus, the king or lord of Galloway. This also was an independent kingdom, sometimes acknowledging fealty to the crown of Scotland, and, at others, refusing it. It was another Fergus, of course, who, fifty years afterwards, rebelled

against Malcolm the fourth. By this wife he had one son called Godred, besides three natural ones, Reginald, Lagman, and Harold; together with many natural daughters, one of whom was married to Somerlid the Lord of Argyll. Somerlid is improperly called Thane by Scottish historians: as the Thanes were lords lieutenant, or something analogous, and servants of the crown, which he was not and could not have been. This at least appears to have been the limitation of the term in Scotland; though, among the Anglo-Saxons, Thein had a wider meaning; being applied to military servants or soldiers in general. This is the connexion which makes the Macdougal and the Macdonald descendants of the Kings of the Isles; though there are differences of opinion respecting the exact descent of these families from this point. That illegitimacy was neither disgrace nor disqualification need not be told, when William assumed the title of Bastard. I may only add, that if, as has been said, the Macdonalds claim an Irish descent, it must still be a Norwegian one, and through the intervention of Olave, himself a Norwegian; while it is equally understood that Somerlid was of the same lineage. I should remark here, as belonging to the history of Iona, that Magnus had erected a see in Mann independent of its Abbots, and that Olave founded the monastery of Rushin.

In 1142, the three sons of Harold the brother of Olave invaded him in his kingdom; when he was slain at a conference, by Reginald, after a reign of forty years. In 1143, Godred, the legitimate son of Olave, who had been absent, returned, overcame these rebels, and, as is said, killed them; which must be an error. The throne of Dublin had been held by Olave for twenty years, and governed by a deputy, Thorfin. Godred was now invited to that throne also, and thus became King of Dublin and

the Isles by the name of Godred the second. Here, as on many other occasions, we trace that intimate connexion between the Western Isles and Ireland, which has been the source of much misapprehension. If the earlier connexions of the west coast with that country arose from the Dalriadan settlements, and if that of Iona formed another bond of union, it is to the Norwegian rule, extending alike over the maritime parts of both countries, that we must look for that intimacy which almost rendered them one people and has given rise to the Highland claims on Irish genealogies. A conspiracy was soon formed between Somerlid and Thorfin; and the result was, that some of the isles were conquered, and given, as it is understood, to Somerlid's eldest son, Dugald. Scottish historians say that Dugald inherited at his father's death; but there is a good deal of contradiction in the history of Somerlid's immediate descendants. Paul Balkason, the governor of Sky, who appears to have been a very honest man, having informed Godred of this event, he arrived from Dublin with a fleet, and was met by Somerlid with eighty ships, in 1156. The contest however terminated in a treaty instead of an action; and a division of the Isles took place. There are more difficulties here; for the Scots say that Somerlid had a right in this case, because his wife was Olave's heiress. But Godred was not only in possession, and that, a long acknowledged one, but had the superior claim in being Olave's heir as a son and a legitimate one; the wife of Somerlid being only a natural daughter.

Every thing in the history of Somerlid seems to show that he was one of those Norwegian chiefs who had contrived, as others had done at various times with more or less permanent success, to make himself independent of the Norwegian kings of Cantyre and the Isles; and who

probably, when he was in danger, acknowledged fealty to them, and, occasionally, to the crown of Scotland also, with whose dominions he came into perilous contact. Finding himself strengthened, it must be supposed, by this last treaty, he made an attempt to dethrone Malcolm the Maiden, by a descent in 1153, aided by his nephew Donald (Gilcolumb) the son of Wymund. But he was defeated by Malcolm's army under the command of Gilchrist Earl of Angus: escaping, and being afterwards pardoned, it is said, as if he had been a subject and a rebel; which can scarcely be admitted. Wymund had been Bishop of Mann and was imprisoned by David at Roxburgh; having been taken in a descent on the coast of Scotland in Godred's absence in 1141. But I may pass over the history of his invasion, as it is fully given in Hailes.

It is fortunate that the balancing and abridging of chronicles is a different office from that of writing history; for who can discover the "drift of" these "hollow states, hard to be spelled." Their acts come at once on us, unprepared: motiveless and disjointed, like those of the kings of Judah. But the policy of petty and of large states is much the same; and the capacities of the actors are not so very different as the magnitude of the implicated interests might make the inconsiderate imagine. If there is any trade which Nature seems to teach, it is this: and when all is done, there is much more difference between King George's crown and robes and King Tamaamaah's scarlet waistcoat and Belcher handkerchief, than between the politics of their several kingdoms. Be that as it may, in 1158 Somerlid thought proper to invade Mann with fifty-three ships: driving away Godred, whom we afterwards find in Norway in 1164. But his career was now terminated; for in a sub-

sequent descent on Scotland, in 1163, he was defeated near Renfrew and slain together with his son Dugald, (Gillicolumb, says Hailes,) or as some assert, hanged. This Dugald should be the spring of the Macdougal family, long powerful in Argyll: but though the Scots say that he received Cantyre and the southern isles as his portion, it would appear by these chronicles, that the northern isles were his patrimony, arising from the treaty formed between Godred and Somerlid. I know not who is to rectify this. Chalmers sides with the Scottish theory, which says that Dugald and Donald, or Ronald, inherited, the former the southern and the latter the northern isles: while others again reverse this division. According to Mr. Dillon, the descent should be as follows. From Somerlid, spring Reginald and Dugal; the former producing Roderic, from whom arise Allan, Dugal, and Angus; the latter being a progenitor of Robert the second. From Dugal, spring Ospac, Uspak or Huspac, Dugal Scrag, and Duncan; the latter producing John of Argyll, and he, in succession, Alexander and John Lord of Lorn or Argyll. Johnstone has given another theory; but these things must be left to the Lord Lyon and his fraternity.

Reginald, Godred's brother, who was said to have been killed with his two other brothers, must have escaped; as he now invaded Mann, taking advantage of Godred's absence. But his reign, or possession, only lasted four days; as Godred returned from Norway, vanquished him, and deprived him of sight. This event seems to have taken place about 1172, when William the Lion and Henry the second were on the thrones of Scotland and England. In 1187 Godred died, and it is said that he was buried at Iona. He left one daughter and three sons; Olave, surnamed the Black, then a minor of

thirteen years of age, whose mother was Fingala the daughter of Lauchlin an Irish King, and the sister of Dervorgilla of Galloway afterwards married to Baliol; together with Reginald and Ivor, who were natural children. This name, Dervorgilla, by the bye, seems to have both amused and puzzled Hailes, who gives various spellings of it. It is simply Gaelic, Diormhorguill, and is the representative of Dorothy. English readers who may chance to be interested in the Queen of Galloway, may be told that the Gaelic mh is sounded v. Godred had nominated Olave to succeed him; but, on account of his youth, the people chose Reginald in 1188. In 1204, Olave being then thirty years old, Reginald, suspicious of his own security, did homage to John of England in hopes of eventual protection; and though there were no other fact to show it, this is sufficient to prove that the Isles had renounced their allegiance to Norway: by this act at least, they did so. About the same time also, he surrendered Lewis to Olave; who, expressing his discontent at the barrenness of his territory, was imprisoned under the custody of William of Scotland, but afterwards liberated by Alexander the second in 1214.

Olave, being at liberty, proceeded to Mann, and then to the court of John; whence afterwards returning, he was compelled by Reginald to marry Lavon, supposed by some to be a daughter of Somerlid, by others a Lamont, and was reinstated in the possession of Lewis. Reginald had married into the same family; having a son by that connexion, named Godred, and a daughter whose name is unknown. Olave's marriage was however annulled by the Church, and he then married a daughter of the Earl of Ross, who is called Ferquard by some, by others, Mac an Tagart. This is the first connexion which appears between the Kings of the Isles and the Earldom

of Ross, afterwards more conspicuous in the family of Macdonald Lord of the Isles. But Reginald's fears of Olave continuing, he did homage again to England in the person of Henry the third; and we have Sir Edward Coke's authority that letters patent were drawn up acknowledging his title. Even yet, doubtful of his strength as of his right, he attempted to confirm both by surrendering his dominions to the Pope in 1219, so as to hold under the see of Rome; adding to this act, which is preserved in Leibnitz, an annual tribute of twelve marks.

Godred, the son of Reginald, was now governor or lieutenant in Sky, and was tempted by his mother to attack and destroy Olave, of whom they still continued in fear. He endeavoured, in consequence, to induce Paul Balkason, who is called Sheriff, to join him in this plan: but the honest Sheriff refused and escaped to the Earl of Ross; where Olave joined him, having fled from Lewis on its being invaded by Godred. After ravaging Lewis, Godred took shelter and sanctuary in Iona, where he was attacked by Paul and Olave in 1223, and defeated, with the subsequent deprivation of his sight; an expedient which seems to have been in use in Scotland as well as in Norway. The outer isles then submitted to Olave; who, in 1224, sailed to Mann with thirty-two ships; where he terrified Reginald into dividing the kingdom; remaining himself in this island with the title of King. Reginald now formed a league with Allan Lord of Galloway, and made a fruitless attempt to recover Mann.

But it appears that even Olave was not yet settled in his kingdom, as ambassadors were now despatched to Haco in Norway, while Reginald married his daughter to the son of Allan, Thomas Mac Dhu Allan, renewing or strengthening by these means the original league. What occurred during this anarchy is unknown; but, in 1226,

the people declared Reginald's throne vacant, and invited Olave to take possession.

We should be very well pleased to know who "the people" were in this case; as we perceive something of no small importance in this act, as to the nature of the Norwegian insular monarchies. It seems that the nobles, or aristocracy, sometimes controuled the Norwegian kings, as they did the Irish and Highland chiefs; but whether in the character of the Ephori of Sparta, as elected Tribunes of the people, or as exercising the hereditary right of aristocracy or consanguinity, does not well appear. But in this case, a more extensive body of the people seems concerned; and this proceeding, coupled with some others which appear in the course of these Chronicles, seems sufficient to prove that the various Norwegian states had imbibed and established those principles of free government which we find among the Frisons and many other of the descendants of the Goths, and to which we owe our own constitution. Nor is it unlikely, for other reasons, that "the people" was somewhat more than a mere aristocracy; as the present House of Keys of the Isle of Mann, which is the popular portion of that government, is a relic of the Norwegian constitution, though an apparently corrupted body. Here we have the right of the people to regulate the succession, acknowledged as fully as it has been by our own Parliament; as the ambassadors to Norway, Gilchrist and Ottar Snikoll, were ambassadors from the people to Haco, and as this is not mentioned as an act of disorder or insubordination. It is doubtless from this source that the laws of Tanistry in Ireland, and the check which the Highland Clans held over the succession of their Chiefs in after times, originated: rights which were not only advantageously exercised on some occasions, but formed

a restraint on misconduct as well as incapacity in the Chief. In this case, the controul, as might be expected, lay in the hands of the principal tenants or gentlemen of the Clan: and there is little reason to doubt that this mixture of a popular check or influence with the despotism inherent in the kingly part of these petty states, was a main cause of the comparative freedom from slavery and servility alike, which is said to have characterized the people, and which must otherwise have been inevitable.

Olave, now at length king, departed on a visit to the outer isles, and, in his absence, Mann was attacked by Reginald and Allan. Returning, on this news, he was in time to encounter a second attack, the first having failed: and, in this, Reginald was killed: being afterwards buried at Furness. The Isles were still considered tributary to Norway, paying ten gold marks at the succession and investiture of each Norwegian king; and they were now again menaced by Allan, as well as by Alexander the second. Olave, however, had not performed any act of homage to Haco, or Hacon, the fourth, who was now king of Norway; and here Torfæus tells us that Dugald Scrog, or Scrag, and his brother Duncan were kings of the Sudereys, and that Haco had appointed Huspac, or Uspak, who is supposed to have been a brother of theirs, as Viceroy; these three being sons of Dugald and grandsons of Somerlid. Torfæus is too often inconsistent to deserve implicit credit: and while this assertion is not very intelligible, it appears to contain two errors. The term Kings must be misplaced, as it often is; while even if tributary chiefs to Olave, we cannot understand the nature of Huspac's appointment. The Sudereys moreover, which are the Western Isles, could not have had two kings independent of Mann and acknowledged to be such by Haco, who claimed and held the feudal sove-

reignty over the whole, while the other isles held immediately from Mann. But this must pass, as hopeless, with much more. Whatever the fact be, Olave arrived at Bergen in 1230, where he performed his homage; returning with Paul Balkason in twenty ships and joining Dugal, Duncan, Huspac, and a Somerlid, who appears to have been a cousin, at Isla. This party, now mustering eighty ships, took Rothsay castle and reduced Bute, where Huspac was killed. This is called by the Norwegians the first expedition of Haco. But other accounts say that the castle taken was Kilkerran in Cantyre, and that Huspac died on board of the fleet some time afterwards.

Olave now surrendered the outer isles, though it is not said which these were, to his nephew Godred Don. If, as is said, "he retained Mann," then probably he must have surrendered the whole of the Western Isles. Godred commenced his career by murdering Paul Balkason, but was himself assassinated in Lewis: leaving a son, Harold, in 1233. In 1235, we find Olave in connexion with Henry; receiving an annual grant of corn and wine for defending the coasts of Ireland; and in 1237 he died.

Olave left four sons; Harold, Reginald, Magnus, and Godred; the former succeeding to the kingdom at the age of fourteen. In 1240, Haco sent two commissioners to Mann, to suspend him till he should render homage; on which he went to Norway and remained two years; returning to Mann, confirmed in his kingdom, in 1242. From about this period commence the negotiations which finally terminated in the secession of the Norwegian government. In 1244, Alexander the second sent ambassadors to Haco, to treat for the cession of Bute, Arran, and the Cumbrays, but without effect; the king refusing "to sell his inheritance for silver." The death of Harold

followed shortly after. For, in 1247, he was summoned to Norway, where he received the daughter of Haco in marriage [illegible], in returning, the whole were lost at sea. When the tidings of this event reached Norway, John the son of Dugald, Somerlid's son, was at that court, and was sent home by the king. This person is called John of the Isles; leaving us still in the same confusion respecting the patrimony and descendants of Somerlid.

The Western Isles and Mann had now, for at least 300 years, been under the Norwegian government, and Alexander, having failed in his negotiations, undertook to gain them by force; for which purpose he embarked, himself, having attempted in vain, by splendid offers, to seduce John from his allegiance to Haco. But, as formerly mentioned, he died at Kerrera, in 1249, leaving his projected work undone; almost uncommenced. In the mean time, Reginald, the brother of Harold, had become king of Mann; but he was murdered after a reign of a few days. Magnus, the last of Olave's surviving sons, was now with John, with the right of succession; but the government was usurped by Harold the son of Godred Don. Haco, hearing of this, summoned him to Norway and imprisoned him; and John and Magnus landing in Mann, the former attempted to place himself on the throne: but the people again interfered, and drove him away; electing Magnus, who thus became king, and the second of his name, in 1250. He was confirmed in Norway in 1252, and returned in 1254. But fearing Alexander the third, who had succeeded to the Scottish crown, he proceeded to London in 1256 to solicit aid from Henry; which, it appears, he did not experience.

The negotiations with Norway for the cession of the Isles, were renewed by Alexander in 1261, but without effect. Thus disappointed, he attacked and ravaged them;

on which Haco planned an expedition to relieve them and to punish his rebellious subjects. Leaving Norway in 1263, he landed in Orkney and then proceeded to Sky; joining Magnus and some Chiefs of the islands, so as to make up a fleet of a hundred ships. These chiefs must, of course, have been subject to the Norwegian government as well as to the King of Mann, though some of them seem to have held lands from the Scottish crown also; being thus under a double allegiance, as I formerly noticed in speaking of the negotiations with John. But it is not improbable that even at this time, if not long before, were sown the seeds of that independence which afterwards appeared also in the Mac Leods, Mac Niels, and perhaps in other families, but which does not satisfactorily seem to have been firmly established till long after, when the power of the Macdonald dynasty had been weakened, and when they became much more numerous. What is properly called Clanship, could not then have been known, but was the result of that independence when it had become perfected, and when every man was a king in his own territory, though some appear to have professed an occasional homage to the Lords of the Isles, as Mac Niel, for one, is said to have done. This term, King, often used indiscriminately by the Norwegian writers for Chiefs, seems to have misled the old Scottish historians, and, sometimes, ourselves also. But all these titles are extremely confused. Kings, Lords, Chiefs, Viceroys, Jarls, Governors, and even Knights and Sheriffs, seem to be lavished with little attention to any distinctions among their qualities and offices. If we cannot define their meaning, we must at least take care not to be misled by them.

It appears that John, as owing allegiance to the Scottish as well as the Norwegian crown, refused to join

Haco with his forces; but there are mentioned, as uniting with him, Margad or Murchard, and Angus, Lord of Cantyre and the Isles. This last is the person who ought, if territorial possession could prove it, to be the ancestor of the Macdonalds. Bute, or Cantyre, for there is some obscurity here, was first reduced, having returned under the dominion of Scotland: while Haco, landing in Lamlash Bay, sent John to open a negotiation with Alexander. This failing, he anchored at Largs; an expedition having also been sent up Loch Long, which committed great depredations in Lennox. His fleet here suffered severely from storms, and, as I have already stated more in detail, he was defeated; though Scottish and Norwegian writers give very different accounts of this event. It appears, however, to have been only a series of skirmishes between the latter and the troops collected by the Stewart: and the defeat of the Norwegians was rather the consequence of the various misfortunes occurring to their ships, than of the partial actions which took place. They were, however, compelled to retire with some loss. Haco returned to Orkney with the remnant of his fleet, and died there in the same year, as I mentioned on a former occasion.

Alexander is now said to have sent the Earls of Buchan and Murray, with Allan of Atholl, to the islands, where they acted with a ferocity and cruelty which the Norwegian writers indignantly contrast with their own more civilized warfare. In 1264, Magnus did homage for his kingdom of Mann to Alexander, being allowed to retain it on condition of supplying twenty gallies to Scotland; but in 1265 he died, and with him terminated the Norwegian kings of the Isles. Haco had been succeeded in the throne of Norway by his son Magnus the fourth, a feeble Prince; and after various negotiations, in

which Henry undertook to be a mediator, there was signed at Perth, in 1266, that yet existing treaty by which the Islands were ceded to Scotland, in consideration of 4000 marks to be paid in annual payments in four years, an annual payment, for ever, of 100 more, and a protection to the Norwegian subjects in the Isles. The penalty for non-performance was 10,000 marks to be exacted by the Pope; and the patronage of the bishopric of Mann was reserved to Drontheim. The Chronicle does not notice its supposed conquest by Stewart and Cumin. That had become unnecessary; and the very fact of the treaty proves that the other islands had not been conquered by Buchan, Murray, and Allan, as the Scots have asserted.

Thus the Western Isles and Mann became a portion of Scotland: but as the latter very soon fell into the hands of England during the contests for the Scottish crown, it may now be dismissed. The history of the Western Isles now also becomes a portion of Scottish history; but it continues even more obscure than when under the Norwegian government. Certainly that crown did not derive much profit or strength from the acquisition, nor do the Islands themselves appear to have gained by the change. That it was not a less turbulent or violent period, is most apparent; and it is equally certain that the Isles were under a far more irregular and divided system of government for a very long time. The anecdotes that have been preserved are sufficient to prove this; while it is also important to remark, that Norway had here generally maintained an effectual controul over a people, which, after its surrender of the government, long defied the power of Scotland.

I formerly noticed a few of the particulars that relate to the affair of Largs, in speaking of the Cumbrays and of Loch Long; from which its real nature may be understood. We must not suffer ourselves to fall into the com-

mon error of supposing that this was a defeat of such a nature as to overturn the Norwegian power in Scotland. The losses which the fleet and the army sustained were in fact trifling; and the only event of any importance which immediately followed it, was the natural death of Haco in Orkney. The secession of Norway from Scotland was the result of negotiations, the continuation of those commenced by Alexander the second; negotiations to which the high spirit of Haco was averse, but which were at length brought to a conclusion under his feeble and more indolent successor. The relative situations of Scotland, of the Isles, and of Norway, had become then materially changed. The latter had long derived no revenue from its islands, and was, on the contrary, involved by them in trouble and expense. Many of the chiefs also owed double allegiance, to Norway and to Scotland both; while, to add to that, their allegiance to the former was frequently given with reluctance, or altogether withheld. Hence flowed the success of the Scottish proposals; and the battle of Largs, as it is improperly called, so much vaunted as a splendid victory of Scottish over Norwegian arms, can only, therefore, be considered as an incidental event, concurring with, and possibly influencing, the negotiations between the two Crowns, but not as the triumph of the one over the other.

The account which Buchanan, among others, gives of it, is plainly fabulous, even if we chose to doubt the fidelity of the Norwegian writers. I have formerly shown that there was nothing that could be called a pitched battle, far less one on which the fate of a kingdom could have depended. The conduct of Haco in the settlement of the Isles after that skirmish, proves that he retained the undisputed dominion. Nor was there any dispute at Largs about the outer Isles, the real kingdom of the Sudereys;

the only objects of contention and negotiation having been the islands of the Clyde, the possession of which by a foreign power was obviously an inconvenience to Scotland, as well as a standing insult. It is palpable moreover, that as this affair took place in 1263, and the Islands were not ceded till 1266, and were then only ceded for a price, after a tedious negotiation, and by a weak prince, the battle of Largs could have had no such result. It had none, in fact, if we except the submission of Mann: yet such has been the ignorance or vanity of our historians as to call it fatal and decisive, and to make it, not merely the remote cause of the acquisition of the Islands by Scotland, but the very acquisition itself. Fordun, who fixes this date in 1262, says that Alexander sent an army against the Isles to punish those who had adhered to Haco. That he sent a force to plunder, is true; but Fordun, like his successors, seems to have imagined that the kings of Scotland were the actual sovereigns of the Islands, over which they had no controul, otherwise than as they might have received homage from those chiefs, who, like John, held other lands under them. Even the accurate Hailes is not correct, when he says that Haco equivocated when he assured Henry that he did not intend to invade the kingdom of Scotland. It is abundantly plain that the object of his expedition was to protect his own dominions and reduce his own rebel chiefs and feudatories. The incursion into Lennox was intended only for the purpose of procuring provisions; and the affair of Largs was almost an accident, coinciding with the failure of a negotiation for the slender objects in dispute. He also believes that 24,000 Norwegians fell in these actions; which he must have seen to be impossible had he not very strangely considered an enquiry into its truth "prolix and unsuitable." As it is no less an import-

ant than a neglected point of Scottish history, and as it is an essential part of the Insular history, I trust I shall be pardoned my own prolixity.

Even could the information be procured, it would be here unnecessary to continue the history of the Western Islands in as detailed a manner as I have done the Norwegian period. That portion of their history will answer the chief purposes which I had in view: and I must now content myself with such slender notices as may serve to convey a general notion of their progress to a recent date. Scottish history must furnish, as well as it can, what properly belongs to History; and it will be sufficient if there are found here such few facts as may further explain those circumstances in Highland antiquities or manners which, without them, might appear obscure. With the exception of the affairs of Bruce, it is impossible to trace the progress of the Islands, from the cession of Magnus down to the defection of John Lord of the Isles, in, or about, 1335. That defection is sufficient to prove a previous allegiance; and if the western coast and the Western Isles were governed, as is understood, principally by the two great chiefs of the race of Somerlid and Olave, forming the dynasties, if they may so be called, of Macdonald and Macdougal, these princes were tributary or feudal Chiefs, unless it is possible that they had commanded as Viceroys. The difficulty that relates to the subject of these families has already appeared.

As to what relates to Bruce, it is almost too well known to need repetition, that, after his escape from the field of Methven, he was defeated in Strathfillan by Alexander Lord of Argyll or Lorn, a Macdougal; that he was kindly received by Angus the Lord of Cantyre, who was a Mac Donald, and abode a winter at Rachlin, then also in the possession of that family, whence he returned to

Arran in the spring of 1306 or 1307. It was in 1308, that he revenged himself on the Lord of Lorn; as I formerly noticed in the accounts of Dunnolly and Loch Awe. Hence arose the misfortunes of the Macdougal family; the fundamental cause of the quarrel between it and Bruce, having been the murder of the Red Cumin, who was the father-in-law of the Lord, Alexander, of Lorn. The defeat of his son John at Loch Awe, was followed by the wasting and loss of part of his estates; and in the subsequent troubles between the houses of Baliol and Bruce, the greater part of this territory was finally forfeited and given to the Stewarts of Lorn. In the same manner were forfeited, on the mainland, the lands of the Cumins and others who had equally taken a part against Bruce.

The fortunes of the other branch were far more splendid. From various sources of information, and principally from the grants of land made to the descendants in succession, it seems clear that the Lords of the Isles, who were of this family, possessed at some time or other, the greater part if not the whole of the islands, always excepting those of the Clyde, and also a considerable territory on the mainland; occupying, as far as we can conjecture, and excepting Lorn, large portions of the whole tract from the Mull of Cantyre to the confines of Sutherland, where they often came into collision with the Earls of that name. Though the Robertsons, or Clan Donachie, were also Macdonalds, thus extending the territories of this family into Perthshire, this was a recent grant, derived from the property of the Mac Gregors, and conferred on this Clan in James the second's time. At one period also they possessed the island of Rachlin, in Ireland; probably by conquest. By what means they came afterwards to possess part of what the

Macdougals had lost in Lorn, does not well appear. Angus Og, Lord of Cantyre, who was the ally of Bruce, was fifth in descent from Somerlid: and his son John, having in a second marriage espoused the daughter of Robert the second, this race became thus allied to the Royal Family of Scotland. Ronald the son of John, surrendered the sceptre to his brother Donald, the same who is mentioned hereafter as having fought the battle of the Hara Law; who having married Mary Leslie, daughter of the Earl of Ross, the Lords of the Isles acquired that title, which they preserved for a considerable period; their right to it having been confirmed to them by James the first. But to return from genealogy to matters more purely historical.

John, Lord of the Isles, appears to have possessed considerable power, which was strengthened by additional grants of land from Baliol; comprising Lochaber, as well as Cantyre, Knapdale, and other possessions on the mainland. The treaty of support to the Lord Baliol, of which these bribes were the price, is dated at Perth in 1335. According to this treaty, the Dominion of the Isles was not only enlarged and strengthened, but its independence was acknowledged: and there is reason to think that this John was a man of considerable political abilities, being especially careful of his own interests.

The continued independence of the Lords of the Isles after the defection of John, is proved by historical record. In 1405, the Bishop of Down was sent as an ambassador by Henry the fourth, to his successors, the brothers Donald and John; who were thus excited to more determined acts of hostility against Scotland, in support of Henry's schemes. A fresh treaty of a similar tendency was made afterwards in 1408. Shortly after, Donald invaded and plundered Rossshire at the head of 10,000

men, under some pretences founded on his claim to that earldom; but, penetrating into Aberdeenshire after ravaging the intermediate country, he was defeated at the celebrated, though disputed, battle of the Hara Law in 1411, by Alexander Stuart Earl of Mar and the grandson of Robert the second. Although allowed to retire under fresh promises of allegiance, and to retain the title thus claimed, the powers of the Lords of the Isles seem from this moment to have received a considerable check; though their dependence on the Scottish crown appears even then to have been little more than nominal. It was by Alexander, a successor of this Donald, at the head of 10,000 men, that Inverness was burnt; that Alexander, who was committed to prison by James the first. To the vigorous conduct of this monarch, and to the anarchy which he had witnessed in his journey to the Highlands, where he found numerous chiefs in a state of independence and perpetual warfare, was Scotland also indebted for the submission of the Clans and the ultimate defeat of Donald Balloch in 1432.

The particulars that relate to these events, given in detail by Abercrombie, are rather too long for my purpose; and are not indeed worth inserting here, further than as they serve to mark the habits and powers of the great Highland princes and chiefs at that period. James had ordered the castle of Inverness to be repaired; and, in 1427, he assembled a parliament there. On arriving, he thought he had entered into a land of savages, (an impression the stronger on account of his education,) such was his astonishment at the outrages and disorders committed by the Chiefs. Being too politic to brave the whole, he enticed them to his court by kind conduct, when he seized and imprisoned forty, among whom was this Alexander and his mother the Countess of Ross.

Three were executed; and, among them, two powerful chiefs, each leaders of a thousand men. Of the remainder, some were afterwards set at liberty, and others executed. Alexander seems to have been also liberated in about a year; and though his mother was detained as a hostage, he attacked and burnt Inverness, if Abercrombie has stated these events correctly. James then collected an army against him, in which he was aided by the Clans Chattan and Cameron, and defeated him in Lochaber. Having then demanded peace in vain, he proceeded privately to Edinburgh; and, appearing before the high altar at Holyrood chapel in his shirt, presented his sword on his knees to the King. His life was consequently granted, and he was imprisoned in Tantallan Castle. Donald's chief motives seem to have been avarice and pride, though the ostensible one was to revenge Alexander his chief and kinsman. The Earls of Caithness and Mar had marched to Inverlochy, probably intending to attack him in his own islands; but were surprised by him and defeated. After this; he overran Lochaber and ravaged it; but hearing that the King was advancing against him in person, he retreated to his islands with his plunder. The Chiefs of the Clans, as they were even then called, on this came in and made submission; leaving hostages, and delivering up three hundred persons, who were hanged. These were the unhappy vassals doubtless, who thus acted the part of scape goats; happy (as we have been told) to be justified in so good a cause. On Donald's final defeat, he fled for protection to an Irish chief, by whom he was killed; while many of his followers were hanged. To attempt to be more minute, is to incur the chance of greater confusion.

But these measures only produced a temporary effect. In the reign of James the second, in 1456, Donald, Lord

of the Isles and Earl of Ross, again rebelled, overrunning Argyll, Lochaber, Arran, and Moray; plundering and burning, in the usual fashion of the times. The castle and town of Inverness are also said to have been burnt by him. But being terrified by the successes of the English in the south, on whom he had relied, he sued for pardon and obtained it. He rebelled again, however, in 1461, and attacked Inverness once more; levying contributions on the surrounding country, taking possession of the castle, and declaring himself King of the Isles, says Buchanan. Subsequently extending his ravages as far south as Atholl, he made prisoners of the Earl and Countess, of whom the former was the King's uncle; setting fire to the church of St. Bride, where they, with the inhabitants and ecclesiastics had taken refuge, and destroying the whole country with fire and sword. The Earl and Countess were carried to Isla: shortly after, Donald's fleet and all his people were destroyed by tempests; and these being considered as a judgment against the sacrilege (the only crime in their estimation), the prisoners were set at liberty. Donald was afterwards murdered by his own harper, as formerly mentioned.

Lest any surprise should be excited by these efforts, and by this reiterated system of defiance on the part of the Lords of the Isles and their dependent or associated Chiefs, it is necessary to recollect that while the Scottish crown was feeble, no less from the power and conduct of its great families than from the narrowness of its territory, the possessions of the former were very extensive; comprising, if the whole are united, all the islands with the whole western side of the mainland from the Mull of Cantyre to the boundary of Sutherland; as I but lately remarked. That a power of this kind should renounce its allegiance and declare war against the

Scottish crown whenever it found an opportunity, can be no matter of surprise; particularly when the difference of language, manners, and origin, is considered, and the slight hold which, at any period, that crown had possessed over the Islands. Whatever may be thought of the mode of warfare, the politics of the Macdonalds are justified by the examples of all times. Not very rigid about the means, their exertions can scarcely be considered those of rebellious subjects against a King, but more like the struggles of a tributary kingdom for independence, or the warfare of independent power.

While it is difficult to separate the history of the Islands from that of the Highlands at large, owing to the continental possessions of the Lords of the Isles, to the wars waged on the mainland, and to other causes, it is impossible to enter upon a branch of history which is still more intimately connected with that of the Scottish crown, and which has therefore wide ramifications. There is a gradual transition from the westernmost and independent Clans to those which were connected with the Crown more like feudal barons than independent chiefs or which presented a mixture of both, that renders any attempt of this nature impracticable in a small compass. The changes of proprietors which these great estates underwent, add also materially to this difficulty, by involving in the same manner, a large portion of Scottish history.

But to sketch it in the barest possible manner, and just as far as is necessary for illustrating the history of the Isles, it must first be remarked that the Norwegian feudal kingdom, which occupied the Western Isles and Mann, or the Sudereys, also included the Orkney and Shetland Isles, or the Nordereys, together with occasional possessions, in ancient times, in Caithness, Suther-

land, and parts of Moray and Rossshire. The northern islands never partook in these Highland feuds, and may therefore be passed over; but the Earls of Caithness and Sutherland, as well as the Mackays, who seem to be of a Norwegian race, often came into warlike contact, not only with each other but with the Clans further to the south, and even with those which belonged to the Dominion of the Isles. Of probably equal antiquity with these, and interposed in some measure between the former and the continental dominions of the Lords of the Isles, we find the Clan Chattan; including, in later times, other names subordinate to that of Macintosh. This family, or dynasty, seems, like that of Sutherland, to have descended from the Catti; the title of the sept, at present, having been probably derived from the heraldic pun which assigned them the cat as a crest.

With all due respect for the genealogies of our northern neighbours, little or nothing can be discovered that is worth depending on, relating to these and their possessions, prior to the date of Somerlid. At any rate, these discussions are out of the present sphere of enquiry. It must answer my purpose to name the greater families of the Cumins, Atholls of Strathbogie, &c. extending their dominions, since they were more like dominions than baronies, from Moray even into Atholl and Lochaber. After the dismemberment of the estate of the Cumins, the new dynasty of Gordon, and others, were established. The Frasers, Chisholms, and many more who figured among the turbulent and powerful Clans of after times, rest on a similar foundation. In Aberdeenshire, the Earls of Mar formed a leading power; but most of the families in this quarter are of Pictish, or German, or Flemish descent, and appertain properly to the Low country. Towards the south-west, were the Earls of

Lennox, among the first in point of power and territory; and to whatever dates we may refer what cannot be proved, we are sure that the Camerons, Colquhouns, Macgregors, Campbells, and many more of equal and less note, were distinct Clans before the period of James the first.

That these Clans conducted themselves in the same manner as the insular ones, even at very early periods, is unquestionable. Contests between the Murrays and the Rosses are recorded. Perpetual warfare indeed seems at all times to have raged in the shires of Sutherland, Caithness, Ross, Moray, and Inverness. In later periods, the feuds and wars among the Mackays, Macintoshes, Forbeses, Frasers, Chisholms, Leslies, Leiths, and many more, were quite worthy of comparison with those of the several ramifications of the Macdonald dynasty. These contests, while they troubled the repose of Scotland, often defied its authority or interference; and that, as much in the very heart of the country as along its maritime out-posts. The celebrated battle fought at Perth in 1396 between two branches of Clan Chattan, the Macphersons and Clan Cay, cum licentia superiorum, is a good example of this: the Earls of Crawford and Murray, who had been commissioned to reduce or pacify these turbulent people, finding it out of their power to effect it, and consenting to this species of duel if it may be so called, in which the celebrated blacksmith of Perth, Henry Wynd, called Gobh crom, gained immortal fame; honours that will rank him with the Horatii, when, in after ages, the youths of Polynesia shall be flogged into English and Gaelic as we have been into Greek and Latin.

To return to the history of the Lords of the Isles; their independence of Scotland, or at least their attempts to

establish their rights to it, are evinced, not only by the treaties which they formed with Baliol and Henry the fourth, but by that with Edward the sixth. In this last, signed at Ardtorinish in 1461 and preserved in Rymer, the Earl of Ross for the time, John, agreed to serve the King of England against all his enemies, on a stipulation by which he was to receive an annual pension of one hundred marks in peace, and two hundred in war; with two other smaller pensions to John his son and Donald Balloch, and a confirmation of his possessions in case of the conquest of Scotland, or, in case of peace, on condition of being included in the treaty. The troubles produced by the Douglases had thus far favoured the policy of the Macdonald; but, some time afterwards, Edward found it convenient to change his own politics, and, in courting the alliance of James the third, he renounced this very short-lived friendship.

The consequences of this new arrangement proved serious to the Lord of the Isles. James having sent an army against him under the Earl of Atholl, he was forced to submit and was deprived of his Earldom. But Knapdale and Cantyre, which he had at the same time surrendered, were restored; and he was re-invested with the title of Lord of the Isles, on condition of holding it under the Scottish crown.

Without pretending to be very precise where no exact information can be obtained, it seems clear that down to this period, from the date, at least, of the defection of John in 1335, the Lords of the Isles had been the kings, or nearly such, of an extensive territory, including the islands together with a considerable part of the mainland; sometimes professing allegiance to the crown of Scotland when they could not avoid it, and shaking it off whenever they found a convenient opportunity. So lax

and so interrupted had been the influence or power of Scotland over the insular governments, that while their conduct was such as might be expected, it may also be justified; particularly when it is recollected that both the progenitors of the Lords of the Isles, Somerlid as well as Olave, were of Norwegian descent; and that, while they had thus little natural connexion with the Scottish race, they must have felt themselves controuled by a foreign, if neighbouring, state, from which revolt was always justifiable when successful. If the mode of warfare was cruel, as we have been taught to believe, the stigma will rest alike on both parties: but if we examine the history of Europe in general about the same period, it will not be easy to discover how the race of Somerlid could well have exceeded its neighbours in this respect.

But we must take care here to distinguish between the period which I have thus attempted to define, and that which included the better-known feuds of the more recent Clans. This appears to have been, in a still greater degree, a state of anarchy, cruelty, and confusion; a thousand petty states alike waging eternal war among each other, and all of them opposing or despising the insufficient power of the Crown. I will not now attempt to relate the very little that is conjectured, rather than known, respecting the administration of justice, or the internal power of the government, under the Lords of the Isles; but it may be safely concluded that so extensive and scattered a territory was not thus long held together, badly as it was probably held, without some system of police; without something more at least than a joint interest in war, which, under such circumstances, could not have been long preserved. The numerous armies which these princes or lords brought into the field,

are indeed sufficient evidence of the internal strength of the Insular kingdom at some periods.

Still, this empire became ultimately dismembered; and that, certainly rather by its own internal defects or the mismanagement of its sovereigns, than by any foreign force. Taking it at its best period, it was not only entire but powerful; and, with the advantages derived from its nature and position, might easily have preserved its integrity, under good management, far longer than it did, against a force so feeble as that of the Scottish Crown. It is reasonable to conclude that the policy had become as barbarous as the age and people: nor could any thing but a series of weak monarchs have suffered such a territory to have been dismembered, as it was, by relations, or proprietors, or officers, who do not seem, at last, to have even been feudatories. That this system of dismemberment had been long in progress, is evident from the history of James the first; nor, had it been otherwise, could the insufficient force with which he threatened the islands, have produced the effects which we know it did.

Although it is impossible to discover exactly the rise of the later independent Clans, which are indeed only well known to us during a short and much more recent period, extending from no very remote date down to our own day, their existence becomes most obvious after the surrender of John, the last Earl of Ross, to James the third, when this great power was broken. Yet it is plain that it had commenced even before the far prior period just noticed. It is not till near the time of James the fifth that we can trace distinctly the great ramifications of the Macdonald family; yet it is probable that the jarring claims to a succession which seems often to have been very ill determined, had, long before this, raised rivals amongst the kindred; and that this, in addition to

many other causes, had, in the time of James the fourth, produced that very regular and perfect system of division and anarchy which was shortly afterwards so firmly established as to have nearly defied the power of Scotland as the more entire kingdom of the Isles had done before, and which was not finally quelled till a very late period. The government may be considered as having been partly conquered by James, but not the people; and if Scotland gained any thing by thus weakening and dividing its great enemy, the acquisition was very small; while the Insular and Highland districts were unquestionably the losers; inasmuch as a divided warfare is always more frequent and destructive than that which is waged between more powerful states. An Act of the Scottish Parliament passed under James the fourth, declaring that the Highlanders and Islanders had become savage for want of a proper administration of justice, is a document sufficient to prove that this state of things had been long established.

That it had at least become firmly established shortly after, is proved by the voyage which James the fifth found it necessary to make to the Islands, in 1536; when many of these Chiefs were taken and brought away. Some were obliged to find security, not only for themselves but their followers; a proof that the system of Clanship was then thoroughly organized: while, from others, whose titles to their lands were found to be usurped, their possessions were taken and reunited to the Crown. It was about this period that the Macdonald who still held the title of Lord of the Isles, died without an heir; and, from that time, this distinction was extinguished for ever.

He would be a bold man, no less than a confident historian, that should attempt to say who were the great chiefs of these days; who was greatest and who least, who

was root, trunk, branch, or offset, in this most intricate Highland tree, or rather forest. Sir George Naylor himself might expect serious explosions of Highland ire, were he to attempt to marshal these fierce claimants to superiority and antiquity; to work his way through the tribes of Macdonalds, and Macleans, and Macniels, and Macintoshes, and Macleods, and Mackenzies; to say nothing of all the other Clans, of minor, and possibly, of equal note. However that be, we cannot be far wrong if we take Lyndsay's authority, for a few of those at least, who were sufficiently conspicuous to have been of those whom James thought proper to bind over to the peace. Among these we find three Macdonalds, a Maclean, a Macniel, a Macintosh, a Mackenzie, a Mackay, and a Macleod; an enumeration that includes continental as well as insular chiefs. I need not requote a passage which has already been quoted to satiety; but there is one Chief in the good historian's enumeration, whose present descendants, whoever they are, seem to have disclaimed him, though unquestionably the most ancient of the whole; since he is proved by undoubted records to be older than even Adam. Whether "Mackin-Lucifer" will hereafter disclaim his own progeny, is another question; but in the mean time the Macmahons (Mahounds) may consider whether they are not of his Clan, and reclaim their ancient name accordingly. Dame Juliana Berners might probably have assigned even his achievement, as easily as her Ladyship discovered that of "Gentlemanly Japhet," if they are ambitious of knowing how many fiery dragons in a field of sulphur checky gules, Mackin-Lucifer bore.

There is no doubt that some of these were offsets from the Lords of the Isles; but though Martin tells us that, even in his day, Mac Niel paid tribute to Mac Donald,

although claiming an Irish descent, I have already shown that there are other grounds than family connexion on which this might have happened. With respect to others, as the Macleans, the claim of cousinship is distinctly stated in the accounts that have descended to us of the feuds of the Clans, and in the genealogy of the Clan Colla or Lords of the Isles. Nor is all this confusion, intermixed with a common descent, inexplicable: when we recollect the circumstances under which these separate claims were set up. As if resolved never to be in want of successors for want of modes of succession, they seem to have adopted all those that ever were dreamt of by lawyers, and somewhat more. Thus, to the practice of hand-fasting, by which wives were taken on trial for a year, as well as to simple marriage, they united that of a more direct concubinage, as also a power, which the chief sometimes exerted, of naming the child who was to succeed him. This nuncupatory succession seems to have been sometimes rendered necessary by the uncertainty that attended the children. The check, not only over such nuncupatory heirs, but over heirs of all kinds which the Clan itself exerted, assured to the people the additional blessings of an elective monarchy; while they could occasionally enjoy the further advantages arising from the frauds and usurpations of guardians during a minority, consequent on the practice of wardship; of which examples are not wanting. Under such a precious system, including the mixed claims of legitimacy, demi-bastardy, absolute bastardy, testament, usurpation, and popular election, it is neither wonderful that Highland genealogy is somewhat of the most obscure, nor that these fierce cousins should have been at perpetual loggerheads, as well for their lands as their more empty prerogatives.

Some new branch having been thus once established, the title of the great sept was dropt, and the name, or patronymic, of the new Chief became the distinction of his Clan. Among those who, with a change of name, still acknowledge their descent from Macdonald and those who do not, it ill becomes a spectator to interfere. These are matters of too formidable a cast for the pen of an unitiated. I have no desire to bring on myself a "querelle d'Allemand" by intermeddling with the inextricabilities of contending Macs. Those who still retained the name of Macdonald were, however, numerous; and if I cannot recollect all these acknowledged scions of the great stock, I have at least had the honour of visiting the lands or the persons of Clanranald, Glengarry, Glenco, Keppoch, Largy, Moidart, Morrer, and Sleat. But pray remember that I am not here performing the office of Marischal Tach. The safe rule of the alphabet is my guide.

If these rival chiefs had not possessed sufficient motives of their own to carry on a perpetual state of divided but savage warfare, when war was the only steady occupation which they possessed, the Scottish crown was always ready enough to encourage them; hoping thus to weaken their power against the kingdom. This was not the way to gain authority over them, it is true; nor indeed did it very effectually answer the purposes of the government, as they often united against it, so as to produce nearly as great inconveniences as when under their ancient and sole Lords. From the same general principle of opposing one powerful chief to another, arose those grants of land by which the Mackenzies and others were enriched; and that protection by which many of the Clans were enabled to establish their independence of their original Chief, from whom, in the nature of tri-

butaries, or dependents, or deputies, or kinsmen, they had received estates and commands.

As a specimen of the policy of the day, an Act of 1581 is not a little remarkable; while it serves to give a general notion of the state of the country in these happy days of clanship and independence. In this, it is declared that there are associated Clans of thieves not amenable to justice, and that any one is at liberty to make reprisals on the whole Clan, for deeds of violence committed by any of its members. King Assuerus's ingenious plan for exciting civil commotions in his own dominions, was not much more effectual; and the consequences of this general license may easily be imagined.. A few years afterwards, an act "to repeal, alter, and explain, so much of," as we phrase it now, was passed as an improvement of this one; which, after declaring all the cruelties practised by the Clans on each other and on the people at large, enumerates all the chiefs and chieftains, great and small; and then, while it thus acknowledged the legal authority of these leaders, obliges them to find security for the injuries which might be committed by their tribes. Hence it was that some of the Clans, unable to find this security, and persisting in acts of violence and rapine, became outlaws, as did the Mac Gregors, among others of less note.

The troubles of Mary's reign gave ample scope to the warlike propensities of the Clans, now firmly established and long opposed to each other. Among others, a formidable insurrection was made by the Macdonalds, for the purpose of resuming Cantyre; and, under pretence of espousing the different contending factions, there were always sufficient causes of war to be found.

Descending to the succeeding reign, the policy pursued by James VI consisted, as before, in arming one

powerful chief against another. As a specimen of this system, Sir James Macdonald having established himself in Isla in 1598, after the battle of Loch Gruinard with the Macleans, the Mac Niels, Camerons, and Macleans were directed to invade him, as the crown had become jealous of his power. The Macdonalds were defeated at Killaru, and Sir James fled to Spain; whence, returning in 1620, he was pardoned, and died at Glasgow. Irritated by these perpetual contests, the King took Isla from this family, and transferred it to Sir John Campbell of Calder, on payment of an annual feu duty. The Campbells had long been Lords of Lochow in Glenorchy; tracing their origin, as it is said, back to the time of Malcolm Canmore, and their name to the marriage of a Malcolm with the heiress of Beauchamp in Normandy; the offspring of which, Archibald, coming over with the Conqueror, married the daughter of Lochow; becoming thus the possessor of the estates, which were afterwards confirmed to his successor Colin by Robert II. By an intermarriage with the three coheiresses of Stuart of Lorn, in the 15th century, this family had become powerful; a great part of this district of the western mainland having thus become their property.

The power which thus came into the hands of the Earls of Argyll was now exerted against the Macdonalds and other chiefs; and thus the Campbells, one of the tribes that were strengthened, like the Gordons and Athollis on the mainland, for the purpose of aiding the hands of government, became one of the most powerful as it was the most recent of the Clans in the maritime Highlands. At this moment they are looked on as a modern race by the common people of the ancient blood; nor is the feeling of animosity towards them quite subsided. The history of the Lewis about the same period

is even more amusing. This district was granted to some Fife gentlemen by the Crown, in 1589: for the purpose of being civilized, as it is declared: just as if it had been the territory of an Indian tribe. The consequence was a troublesome warfare; out of which the original possessors, the Macleods, escaped, but with the loss of the contested property; yet without the invaders profiting by it, as it fell into the hands of Mackenzie of Kintail. This story is told at greater length in the account of Lewis.

It now becomes even more difficult than before, to separate the insular history from that of the mainland: nor, in this very slender sketch, need it be attempted. Though the state of the Highlands was thus, in some measure, altered by the diminished territory and power of the ancient tribes, their habits continued much the same in the time of Charles. Employed in Montrose's wars, they generally gained consequence from their superiority to the troops to which they were opposed; and thus that contempt which they had always entertained for their Lowland neighbours, was augmented, and their pride concentrated on their own importance. Those which appear to have made the greatest figure during that period, were, Macdonald, Glengarry, Clanranald, Maclean, Macgregor, Macnab, the Farquharsons, and the Atholl men. But they were yet destined to receive from the vigorous arms of Cromwell, that check which their lawful monarchs had never been able to establish. Under the Usurpation, garrisons were placed in various parts of the Highlands, and, among the rest, from Fort William to Inverness; while dispersed and strong parties were kept in motion throughout the country, and some of the proudest Chiefs were obliged to find security for their future conduct. The terror of his arms is not less remembered

here than in England. Birt gives an amusing example of it when repeating what a Highland Chief had told him of the impression which the Emmanuel in the Puritan flag had left on his memory. Loch Cateran too preserves the remembrance of his soldiers to this day, as does the neighbourhood of Inverlochy; nor had the Lowlanders ever enjoyed such security and repose, as they did at this period, from the first rise of the Clans till the final subjugation of the whole of this turbulent country.

As a reward for the exertions of the Highlanders, the forts established by Cromwell were abandoned at the Restoration: while the Marquis of Argyll, who had acquired a great ascendancy, being persecuted by Charles and James in succession, the Clans which had nearly sunk under his power recovered a formidable independence. Being attached to prelacy, if not Roman Catholics, they were thence employed against the Presbyterian influence; and hence contrived to strengthen themselves, and to establish their independence, both of the civil and the criminal law of Scotland. As if it had not been sufficient to relax those laws by which they had formerly been restrained, they were encouraged in their habits of violence by being invited to overrun the Low country where the Presbyterian interest was strongest. The same system of plunder was pursued by them after the battle of Killicrankie; so that the tract which lay on the Highland border, became subject to worse than the miseries of a frontier country in time of war.

It was the mistaken policy, alike, of William to court them as valuable allies, and to bribe those whom he ought to have restrained; thus adding to that self-importance which was at last destined to lead them to their own

destruction. At the accession of George the first, however, instead of pursuing that system which might have been expected from the care and activity with which they had been increasing their strength, they joined in an address to the throne, imploring protection and promising allegiance. This document, containing upwards of a hundred names, is valuable, as serving to inform us of those who were among the personages of most power and consequence at that period. But, instead of peace, the rebellion of Mar followed; with what success, is well known; as is the event of that more recent attempt, which first left the Highlands, a conquered country, and has now made them a part of ourselves, to the advantage alike of all.

Some of the proceedings which intervened between 1715 and 1745 are still however deserving of notice before quitting this period, in which the history of the Islands can, still less than formerly, be separated from that of the Highlands in general. An Act was first passed, with the intention of diminishing the power of the Clans, by which it was ordered that, in case of rebellion, the lands of the rebellious Chief should be given to his vassal if loyal, and the reverse, if the vassal himself was alone engaged in insurrection. This was followed by another, superseding the claims of the superiors over the services of their vassals, and commuting the latter for a money rent; and by a third for disarming the Highlanders. Notwithstanding these expedients, however, the services continued to be performed; and the disarming was so managed, that the Jacobites contrived to escape, while the others surrendered their arms as proofs of their loyalty. The formation of the military roads was the last of these expedients; and, by these, not only was the country rendered more accessible to

troops in case of need, but communications were opened among the garrisons, which had been replaced by William; while the Highlanders and Lowlanders approximating more easily, their mutual fears and animosities were in a slight degree diminished as they became better acquainted. Still, however, in certain parts of the country, a system of regular or occasional depredation was carried on by some of the Clans, and more especially by those who had been formerly treated as outlaws. But no war had now for a long time been waged among the Clans themselves; the last event of this kind having been the battle fought at Glenroy between the Macintosh and Keppoch, in the time of William, to determine the right over certain lands. It was against the Lowlands that these hostilities, or rather acts of robbery, were directed; the temptation to plunder being a greater inducement than the hatred and contempt in which the Highlanders still held their neighbours. The apology made by Cameron to Grant for the mistake of his people, in plundering the estate of the latter instead of Moray, "where every one was free to take his prey," will convey a notion of the feelings thus entertained. Single partizans, such as Gunn, the Robin Hood of the north, and independent banditti in the wild recesses of Badenoch and on the borders of Lennox, carried on a similar system of warfare. But the most noted of these predatory chiefs was the great Rob Roy: if perhaps we except Barrisdale, who might even now, as I formerly remarked, set up, with his neighbour Arnisdale, as joint Regulus of Loch Hourn.

It was rather a late period, it must be owned, at which this hero arose to revenge the ancient wrongs of his Clan, as the phrase is, and to prove, at the same time, their just claims to all they had suffered; combining the discord-

ant, yet kindred offices, of thief and thief-taker, like a well-educated pupil of Jonathan Wild. The conduct of Lovat, with different objects, was equally notorious. For the purpose of supporting the military spirit of his Clan and his own consequence at the same time, as conducive to the political designs he had in view, and with the design, then universal among the Highland Chiefs, of repressing innovation and preventing the settlement of strangers, he became the tyrant of his district; destroying the lands and the cattle of his neighbours, and not even sparing their persons; while he contrived, by means of his emissaries, to rescue from the fangs of the law, such of his people as had fallen within its power.

The Chiefs, generally, were encouraged in that spirit during this interval, by France as well as by Rome, from whom they received supplies both of arms and money. This state of things gave rise, on the part of government, to the levy of the independent Highland companies; called the black watch, to distinguish them from the red-coated troops of the standing army. These were formed out of the idle persons of several Clans; the men being officered by their own tacksmen and the sons or brothers of their chieftains, and commanded by the latter. That this system was productive of some good effects, is certain; although it was often asserted that, with the true fellow-feeling of their origin and connexions, they sometimes shared the plunder with the banditti whom they were created to quell. Whatever advantages might have been derived from them, was probably also amply compensated by the effect which this establishment had in renewing or maintaining that very spirit of war and independence which former laws had been invented to quell.

It is quite unnecessary to pursue this sketch further.

The events of 1745 are too well known to require even the barest notice. Where Home has not rendered exact justice, for reasons now well known and little creditable to a historian, he has been corrected by Colonel Johnstone and by that more accurate estimate of things which has been formed since the heat of party feeling or ancient attachment has cooled. The sword then did its duty, and somewhat over much of that; and, by one sudden and violent catastrophe, was for ever terminated a system which, for so many ages, had been the cause of terror, and misery, and poverty, to the actors and sufferers; as, to us, it remains a source either of wonder, or admiration, or delight, or horror. What the sword left unfinished, the law perfected; and, by the Act for abolishing the heritable jurisdictions in 1748, the Highland system of policy became what my long-winded story is, a tale of other times.

I have a remark to add. The Highlanders speak of an ancient independent kingdom. I have shown that the Western country was a Feudal and a Norwegian dominion. This is the only æra, and place, and quality, of any known Highland kingdom. If it was ever perfectly independent after 1266, the governors were still of Norwegian blood. The Celts were the conquered and governed: we know not when they were ever governors. It is also doubtful if ever Scotland, as such, had even pretended to govern the Islands. Dr. Macpherson takes the reverse "for granted;" it should be proved. The Scots affirm that she had possessed them from the most remote times: but the fictitious history of Donald Bane is part of that affirmation. Norway had the right of remote conquest and possession; and had she held the Sudereys to this day, it would have been as the English Duke of Norwegian Normandy now holds the Channel islands.

BENBECULA. PASTURAGE OF HIGHLANDS.

THERE is something in the very word Island, which, without any previous acquaintance with the merits or demerits of the individual, or any knowledge of its extrinsic or intrinsic qualities, renders it an interesting object of contemplation to the human faculties: causing it to play in and about the imagination, with visionary charms, derived from—no one knows what. Is it that we are thinking of our own "Little island," or of Fortunate islands, or, like Sancho, of being king of an island, or of having an island, all our own, "cum uno messuagio, quatuor cottagiis, quatuor toftis, uno columbar. tribus gardinis, centum et quatuor acris terræ, quadraginta acris prati, &c. &c. &c. cum pertinentibus," and no enclosures to keep up, no neighbour's cattle to pound, and so forth. If that is not the solution, send me a better. Whatever it be, mankind has always shown a hankering after islands. It is not Sancho alone who has had a desire to conquer an island, to possess an island, and to govern an island; as many personages of no less notoriety are very ambitious of governing the Ionian islands; the East Indian islands, and the West Indian islands, to say nothing of the two Parliamentary islands of Berbice and Demerara, and of St. Helena's island, and of the government of Ascension island. Then we take possession of islands, by *raising* a pocket-handkerchief on a broomstick, and burying a halfpenny: even though it should be of three day's standing, like Sabrina. Hence also we envy King

Tamaamaah his island, and we send gunpowder and missionaries to islands, and try to set islands by the ears, and write pamphlets on the Falkland islands, and find room for dependents in the island of Mauritius and in Prince of Wales's island, and improve the condition of islands by planting in them guns, turnips, dissensions, rum, and the small pox.

Furthermore, we colonize islands with the rejectamenta of the halter and the law, send our younger sons to die in islands, maroon mutinous buccanneers on islands, as Vulcan of yore was transmitted to the island of Lemnos and Napoleon to the island of Elba, and despatch fleets to discover islands of ice in the Polar basin. If St. Columba established himself in an island, so did Robinson Crusoe and the Monks of Patmos; and Venus was worshipped in the island of Cyprus, as the Colossus of Rhodes was built on an island. As the Highland Chieftains erected their castles on islands, so did the Knights of Malta; and the heart of Ulysses, as all schoolboys know, was divided between the rival islands of Penelope and Calypso. Cos lettuce comes from an island, and so does madeira; to say nothing of the island of Zante, without which we should have no minced pies. If the original Paradise was not an island, there was one in the islands of Mirza, and so there is in the Fortunate islands, if we could find them out: unless indeed they are the Loo Choo islands. Then there was the old island of Atalantis, which seems to have met with the fate of Sabrina, and my Lord Bacon's New Atalantis, which I hope never to see as long as I live. As to the Pelew islands, and Sir Thomas More's island, and the islands of George Psalmanazar and of Captain Lemuel Gulliver, I must pass them by, lest you should learn more geography than you can at present digest; particularly as I have two or three

hundred of my own to examine: concluding with the islands of Ely and Thanet surrounded by lofty cliffs and a roaring ocean; not forgetting that, instead of joining the party in the Elysian Fields, Plato chose to reside apart, as you will find in a book of high authority, in an island of his own.

But my present business is with Clanranald's islands. This is a still more extraordinary country than South Uist. Being self-erected pilot, and knowing as much about Benbecula as Nova Zembla, we stood on with a fair breeze out of Loch Eynort; soon making Loch Skiport, and then looking out for the channel by which the two islands were separated. But as no channel appeared, and as nothing did appear but more islands and more rocks and more sounds, and every one like every other, I concluded either that Loch Skiport had grown larger since my former visit, or that the vessel was standing still. Instead of this, we had run past the whole fry and both the channels, and were proceeding as fast as possible along North Uist. If the natives find their own way home, it must be by the same instinct as the herrings.

At length I betook myself to the boat and rowed boldly into Loch Uskeba, hoping to land somewhere. You must not suppose that Loch Uskeba is filled with whisky, as a certain geographer thought the Lake of Geneva was full of gin: it is, simply, Water Bay. The attempt to find our way through it, proved as entertaining as impracticable; every fresh shore and headland being exactly like all the rest, and the whole a labyrinth of islands, peninsulas, promontories, bays, and channels. When we thought we had arrived at the mainland, it proved to be an island, every true channel proved a false one, and after being caught in half a dozen of these traps, we had the satisfaction of discovering that we were

going back again to sea, and were at the point where we had begun. But as all troubles must end at some time, we did at last find a land passage to the main island: leaving the boat to shift for itself in its own proper element.

All this would have been provoking enough in bad weather; but the bright channels glittered in the sunshine, and even the grey rocks breathed of spring, as the sweet western breeze blew over the purple heath that hung trailing over them, dipping its blossoms in the polished green sea. Blue skies and bright seas can confer beauty even on the most barren shores; here there were the additional charms of variety, in the intermixture of land and water, in the endless and unexpected changes of form, in the deep quiet bays, the streaming channels, the bold and various rocky shores, and the islands of all forms and sizes which, at every moment, came in view and vanished again. The gay verdure of June, spangled with blossoms of all hues, scarcely left it necessary to imagine the whole a watery garden in the ocean, ornamented by the hand of industry as disposed by that of Nature. It required little effort to conceive it decked with the brilliant produce of a more favoured climate, adorned with trees and embellished with works of art; emulating the flowery islands of Mirza's vision. But, as if in contempt, Nature, so often uselessly lavish, has here thrown away on a hopeless climate, that which might have formed the seats of delight to hundreds. The day was not far off when the sea would rage, the rains descend, and the winds blow, and when all this bright scene would reappear in its far more frequent dress, less enticing than even "the long hollow valley of Bagdad."

Benbecula is about seven miles in length and eight in breadth, and, with the exception of a single hill of no great elevation, is nearly a flat. Wia and Grimsa, with

the crowd of islets that skirt the shores, assist in forming that labyrinth of land and water which gives so singular an appearance to this portion of the Long Island. Both the channels are dry sands at low water; so that there is a passage from South Uist to North Uist through Benbecula, by means of the north and south strands. The western side is flat, dry, and sandy; while, towards the middle, it becomes uneven, interspersed with lakes, low eminences, and protruding rocks; that which ought to be dry land being a brown bog scantily sprinkled with rushes and moory grasses, soft and impassable in winter. Thus, in this strange island, the elements of land and water seem as if they were yet waiting to be separated; that which should have been terra firma being half water, and what should have been sea being half land. In such an amphibious position, the Benbeculites, with a little of the spirit of their forefathers, might defy both fleets and armies; unless indeed it were a corps of cavalry mounted upon Hippopotami.

In this flat country, Benbecula hill seemed, like those two tremendous hills in Cambridgeshire, Gog and Magog, quite a mountain. I here saw the solution of all the mysteries in which our boat had been involved; and, instead of being surprised at the difficulties, was much more astonished to find that we had reached the island at all. The whole eastern coast looked very much like those ingenious labyrinths which you find upon a water tabby: it is a vile comparison, but I can find no better at this moment. But the land was worse still; and then I wondered no longer that the inhabitants of this side of the island should have built their houses in the water, like the Venetians; for if it was difficult to get at them by sea, it was impossible by land. As the sea was all islands, the land was all lakes; Nature seeming to have

kindly considered, that, in providing so many habitations for trouts, eels, ducks, and frogs, it was but fair to compensate the Benbeculites by putting into their sea what she had stolen from their land. I began resolutely to count the lakes; to number the islands being a hopeless attempt. For a time the account went on well enough. Great and small, crooked, and round, and long, and serpentine, I arrived at thirty, and forty, and fifty, and sixty, and then I was obliged to adopt a new plan, and thus I got to seventy. At eighty, they began to dance before my eyes; but at length, in spite of all my contrivances, my head began to whirl, and at the ninetieth, I gave up the point in despair. Clanranald might be robbed of lakes enough to stock half the parks in England, and not discover his loss. Subjects of moral meditation, as sundry worthy men have thought, may be extracted, even from a poker; and thus the ladies may learn from Benbecula to controul their love of diamonds; particularly if they are to be hung on a sow's ear.

On gaining the summit of the hill, the hair of Niel Maclean seemed ready to stand on end as he exclaimed, "gude guide us what na a country is this." I suppress my own apostrophe as less explanatory. On each side was the wide sea, spread bright under the noon-day sun, a boundless expanse of sky and water, in the midst of which, stretched out the endless ridge of the Long Island; diminishing its apparent breadth as it retired on both sides in slow perspective from that central point, and fading into air as it withdrew, still unterminated and still seeming interminable. Southward, the dazzling intricacy of land and water was now increased in extent as in confusion, reaching to the mountains of South Uist; and it being no longer possible to distinguish, over this mottled surface, what was a fresh-water lake and what

an arm of the sea. As the prospect southward was thus prolonged in a bold perspective of mountains, so, to the northward, the high lands of North Uist were succeeded by the lofty peaks of Harris, rising above each other in all the soft clear tints of the brightest of atmospheres, till they vanished in the blue of the sky. But the interval here was even more intricate and dazzling, in the intermixture of land and water, of lakes, inlets, islands, and promontories. As the sun shone in all its splendour on the thousand lakes of North Uist, on the inextricable sinuosities of Loch Eport and Loch Maddy, and on the no less bewildered channel by which Benbecula is separated from that island, the silvery lustre of the water seemed to absorb as it dazzled the sight, and I felt as if the mountain on which I was sitting, with all that lay below my feet, was afloat on the ocean. The world, for aught I know, may produce other scenes of this kind; but, in creating this one, Nature seems to have resolved to frolic in her own way, and to shew that she could make one part of Scotland, at least, unlike to every thing else; utterly out of all rule, utterly incomprehensible. To have found its inhabitants with fins and wings, would scarcely have been matter of more wonder; and indeed in omitting this obvious improvement of the present breed, she seems to have been less careful than usual in adapting her animals to their habitations.

It was not very easy to find the way back to our boat; but at length I espied our men on an elevated bank. On arriving within a few hundred yards of them, we found we were separated by an arm of this endless sea. It was necessary to make a circuit of a mile, to some houses; and we had just come within speaking distance of the people, when we found ourselves at the brink of another of these provoking ditches, running round us backwards

into the country, we knew not where. We might have wandered thus till now, always near enough to our people to converse with them on some quarter, but never getting one jot nearer. But the Benbeculites saw our distress, brought a boat out from some hole that seemed, like every thing else till it was tried, dry land; and, by some means or other which I never yet could discover, we got back to our vessel.

If there is any part of the Highlands that would seem less likely than another to bind the inhabitants to their native soil, it is Benbecula; where that which is not rock is sand, that which is not sand is bog, that which is not bog is lake, and that which is not lake is sea. There is no green glen here where the inhabitants are associated by mutual wants and pleasures, no "rude mountain or torrent's roar" to produce those attachments which poets have sung and on which philosophers have speculated. The grounds of moral attachment ought not also to be very powerful in a district that is conspicuous for its poverty even among its poor neighbours. Yet no inducement has yet tempted an inhabitant of Benbecula to leave his miserable island; and hence that extreme poverty, the result of an overcrowded population, which has reduced the wages of labour and the sizes of farms to at least two-thirds of what they are in the neighbouring ones. Every maxim is not true because it is familiar, or commonly believed; as Montaigne says, there are many things "prinses a credit." The strong attachment which the inhabitants of mountainous countries are said peculiarly to show to their native soil, is among the number of philosophical dogmas which have been received without examination. It is believed, merely because it has been a thousand times repeated. It is not the more true because it has given rise to some beautiful lines in the

"Traveller;" but it is the more generally believed; because nothing so tends to perpetuate a maxim, whether false or true, as the clinquant of poetry. He who has constructed a sonorous and successful couplet, may, like Pope and Dryden, boast of more influence than all the moralists who ever prosed.

If I were to refine on this maxim, it would be to say that the attachment of a native is in the direct proportion of the badness or the poverty of his country; that he was attracted to it in a ratio the inverse of all the obvious causes of attraction. But, strictly speaking, neither is true. The inhabitant of Benbecula, he of South Uist, of Coll, or Tirey, is attracted by sand and rocks, by bog and water, by rain and storm and poverty. The native of Sky or Mull, of Rossshire or Sutherland, is no less strongly attached to his cloudy and windy region, to his rocky mountains, barren moors, and boisterous seas, than he who may riot, could he feel them, in the romantic beauties of Loch Cateran, or among the glassy waters and wooded islands of Loch Lomond. The Hollander loves his odoriferous canals and his submarine meadows, no less than the native of the Valais or Chamouny does the woody valley, the cascade, and the snow-topped mountain that are supposed to bind him to his native land. The Arab of the desert has drank camel's milk and robbed his neighbours since the time of Ishmael; nor would he exchange his sands and his tents, his starvation and thirst, for all the green fields and rivers, the cities and the cultivation, which the sun visits from its rising to its setting. It is easier to tame a tyger than a New-Hollander: dress him in a good coat and cram him with beef and porter, and he takes the first opportunity to strip himself naked and to return to his caterpillars and putrid fish.

It is the native land that constitutes the charm, be that land what it may: but still, it is only a charm to the uncivilized and the uninformed. Pride, ignorance, and habit will explain it all. As wealth and knowledge increase, the charm is broken; and the man soon finds that the sun shines as bright on other countries as on that which gave him birth, and that if he leaves the narrow hut which fostered his infancy, it is easy to replace it by a better. Thus the patriotism of ignorance and habit is dissolved; and it is to far more refined feelings, perhaps in a far different order of persons, that we must look for that attachment which is founded on rational principles, and which, it must be hoped, is not so easily extinguished as cosmopolists would wish us to believe. It is, further, futile to imagine that the common people are sensible of the peculiar charms of a mountainous and romantic country. These are refinements that belong to education, to the cultivated taste. If the Highlander would show you a fine prospect, he does not lead you to the torrent and the romantic rocky glen, to the storm-beaten precipice or the cloud-capt mountain. It is to the Strath covered with hamlets and cultivation, or to the extended tract of fertile lowlands, where the luxuriance of vegetation and wood depends on the exertions of human labour.

But I must not tire you with moralities because Benbecula is empty of aught else. No antiquities except Castle Wia, and that, nothing. Some rare plants, and among the rest, Ranunculus gramineus, for which you do not care; so that I have no opportunity of displaying my botanical science: rocks, for which you care still less, equally despising my geology; water fowl which you only care to eat and of which I could give you a long list, with all the Linnæan names in regular order, from Pelecanus carbo down to Tringa cyclus, besides all manner

of obscene sea monsters, Ascidia, Asterias, Actinia, Nereis, Scolopendra, Medusa, Nais, Holothuria, and no one knows what more. What charming long letters I could manufacture out of all this science, botanical, zoological, geological, and ichthyological; but, dumb as Crabbe's orator when he had stumbled on the wrong audience, I must bottle up my science and sigh over the chilling indifference of you and all mankind, and the wrecked hopes of my polylogical vanity.

Still, I do not mean to let you go Scot free. You have not added those "pendicles" to the original farm of Abbotsford, in imitation of your friend Jedediah, without having learned to care about runts and kyloes and hogs, and dinmonts; and therefore I expect that you are to read with profound attention and interest what I shall now and hereafter propose to you on all matters of Highland farming and its pertinents.

In ancient Highland times, pasture farming, as a distinct occupation of land, was unknown; and some of the greater farms which are still held on tack, together with the yet existing remains of joint holdings, serve, even now, to give an idea of the system of those days. It consisted chiefly in the rearing of black cattle; and the production of these for exportation still forms the basis of the pasturage of the islands, as well as of numerous farms on the mainland; either where these are on a small scale, or where circumstances in the nature of the land render them more convenient or profitable than sheep. In the case of the smallest tenants, this species of pasturage is unavoidable. It is almost equally so in the islands, if at least these are at any distance from the mainland; because sheep do not bear a long sea voyage. Cattle are exported in a lean state; Highland bones to be covered with Scottish and English beef; being com-

monly purchased on the spot by itinerant drovers, more rarely by the tacksman or proprietor of the lands. If, with respect to the islands, there is an advantage in rearing cattle preferably to sheep, there is a counter-vailing disadvantage; because sheep are able to collect food from various sorts of rough or wet ground, where cattle, either cannot walk or pick up the dispersed grasses and plants. But the chief obstacle to this branch of pasturage, is the want of winter food. The sheep stocks can be diminished at the approach of winter; but as cattle must be kept to a certain age, the numbers are limited to those for which there is food throughout the year. Even thus, many evils follow; as some occasional overstocking is scarcely to be avoided; whence many animals die in severe winters, while those that survive till the return of spring are of less value in the market than they would have been under a different plan of feeding. The Highland breeds are all small; but they combine many excellent qualities, and are admirably adapted to the country and climate. They vary however in different places, from having experienced very unequal degrees of attention. Those of Sky are reckoned among the best. That a Highland bull has been sold for eighty guineas, is a proof of the care bestowed on this branch of rural economy.

Dairy farming may be said to be utterly unknown; neither butter nor cheese being made for exportation, and scarcely any of the former, even for domestic use, among the smaller tenants. The manufacture of cheese for private consumption, is also very limited; most of the milk being consumed in its natural state. The want of meadow land, of enclosures, and of winter food, render dairy farming, indeed, impracticable. For the same reason, cattle are not fattened for salting; though there are

some situations where, as in Ireland, this practice might be adopted with advantage.

In former times, sheep were cultivated solely for domestic consumption, both as regarded the meat and the fleece. Of the latter, indeed, there could never have been much superfluity; as the original breed of the Highlands, which is the short-tailed Norwegian variety, has a miserable and scanty fleece. This, known also in Shetland, is still to be found in St. Kilda, exclusively; a spot which, in many respects, conveys an idea of what the Highlands once were. It has been superseded, in a general way, by the black-faced or Tweedale breed; and that, now, on the great sheep farms, is becoming fast replaced by the Cheviot, with a great accession of profit. While the rearing of a few sheep is advantageous even to the smaller tenants, as enabling them often to derive profit from pastures which black cattle could not effectually consume, they have gained considerably by the introduction of a better breed, whether in the sale of their mutton or of their fleeces; the latter being purchased by vessels that make an annual visit from Liverpool and elsewhere. The system of sheep-farming on a large scale, which is of modern introduction, is a question of far greater importance and extent, both as an object of profit and policy; since, in itself, it almost constitutes the revolution which this country has undergone since the suppression of its independence, or anarchy. That it has been attended by a great increase of wealth to the nation at large, as well as of revenue to the proprietors, is most evident; since it implies an absolute creation of new existences. The mere substitution of one animal for another, of the flock of sheep for the herd of black cattle, would have had this effect, by permitting the consumption of much pasture which formerly decayed as it sprung, untouched. But besides this, the introduction of sheep

has had the effect of enabling the farmers to take the greatest advantage that could be derived from the summer pastures: balancing the inequality by a due management of the flocks, so as to ensure greater gains and lighter losses than from any possible mode of managing herds of black cattle. The other advantages which have been experienced from it, are dependant on causes of another nature; connected with the system of dividing and allotting lands, and of occupancy: respecting which, more political myopism and folly have perhaps been broached, than on any one in the whole range of national economy. The case was however the same in the south of Scotland when first the same system was introduced: it was once the same even in England; nor can any anger, be much hotter or any lamentations more pathetic, than, those of the English political writers of that day, on the substitution of sheep for men. This question I shall however defer for the present.

Nothing in the ancient system was more remarkable than the great superfluity of horses once common in this country, and even yet, far from suppressed to the degree which would be most advantageous for the tenants themselves. If considered as a branch of pasturage, it was a source of loss rather than profit; as they were not reared for systematical sale or exportation. As a present branch of rural economy, the people pay little or no attention to it; though in Jura, and occasionally elsewhere, a few are bred for a market. A few also are sold out of Sky and Mull to Irish dealers, who come in boats to purchase; but I believe these are merely the remains of those which, in consequence of the new arrangement of the farms, had become superfluous. Some excess of this kind is likely to continue till the country has entirely settled into the new system.

Although generally small, the breeds of Highland

horses are very various and undefined, and not often estimable for their beauty. Whether they ever possessed the same breed as Shetland, is not known: at present, there is no appearance of it, even in St. Kilda, where the ancient sheep remain. As might be expected, in the vicinity of the Lowlands they become of larger stature and of greater diversity of form; often, however, without gaining much, either in beauty or value. I have scarcely seen any character, or points, by which a jockey would distinguish any of the races. Every one agrees that the breed of Tirey was eminently beautiful; but not a relic of it remains. Among those which I have seen, some in Mull appeared to have most character; and they are also esteemed among the most serviceable. They are of a compact and handsome make, with somewhat of that fineness of limb which is supposed to mark what is called blood. There is no doubt that valuable ponies might be found, and also bred in the Highlands; but they are materially injured, hardy as they are, by want of food and shelter, and by ill treatment. They are very seldom housed, and rarely have any winter food provided. When worked, whatever that labour may be, they are scarcely ever fed with corn; nor, when ridden, stabled. If that happens by chance, they have no bed. To feed horses with oats in this country, would obviously be like treating them with roast beef and plum-pudding in England. They are turned loose in the hills or moors at night; if necessary, tethered; and must contrive, as well as they can, to eat and sleep both, as fast as possible, that they may be ready for the next day. With all this, the better kinds endure a great deal of work, without remonstrance or falling away. Breaking in, or education of any kind, is, of course, out of the question. No great praise can therefore be given to their paces; but being generally

docile and good-tempered, no other evil follows. In many places, they are worked without being shod; sometimes, even on roads and hard ground. Even when this practice is adopted, they scarcely ever shoe the hind feet. The consequence is, that their feet are generally excellent; nor did I ever witness lameness from want of shoes. In Tirey and Coll, there was not even a shoeing smith: although the latter island is very rocky. I have no doubt that the practice of the ancients with regard to horses, might, for many kinds of work, be revived with manifest advantage. I took occasion formerly to remark how little the Highlanders used their horses for riding. Should the introduction of roads, the change of dress, or other causes, ever render this practice fashionable, they would learn to pay more attention, as well to the breeding as to the management of their horses.

I believe there is neither an ass nor a mule in the Highlands, though it is not unlikely that the introduction of these would be advantageous; from their facility in feeding, whether as to the quality of the food, or the scraps of land whence they will collect it. In a country where, from the minutely divided state of the land and its extreme rudeness, the system of occupancy and work is nearly Chinese, it should be a leading object to turn every corner and every plant to some account. In former days, goats were common; but they have nearly disappeared. The active Highland sheep feeds wherever a goat can, and is more profitable; and the small tenants have therefore given up the latter animal. Flocks are occasionally kept by the larger tenants, more for variety than profit; but wherever planting is intended, they are commonly prohibited by the proprietors.

Among the branches of Highland pasturage, the least profitable is the breeding of those abominable black and

white collies which seem to have little other occupation than to bark at the heels of horses. If the people would eat them, there might be some excuse. Their diet might almost keep as many children; and excepting the very few wanted on the sheep farms, there is literally no business for them. Among the small tenants, they lead the lives of gentlemen. Mr. Dent would have performed a humane act if he had taxed them at five guineas a poll. I once saw executed an edict which savoured deeply of oppression, but which I believe was necessary, certainly advantageous. The poor people were positively in want; and the alternative offered, was to quit their farms or execute their dogs. From forty families, I think, there were one hundred and twenty useless animals destroyed.

Now these good people, who thus liberally entertain guests from which they can derive no benefit, are silly enough to hate or fear pigs as much as if they were Jews or Turks. Here the people of Shetland and Orkney have shown much more good sense. If they choose to persist in disliking pork, or, what is the fact, in not choosing to try whether they like it or not, they might recollect that the animal is saleable under many forms, and that they are under no compulsion to eat their own bacon. Not but what they would soon learn; if we may judge by their emigrants in Canada, to whom salt pork is a daily diet, and who are not long in understanding how to devour it voraciously. A pig is at least as ornamental as a collie; what he devours he will at some day refund, and he has the merit of neither barking nor biting. It is plain that the Highland cottagers could keep them on at least as good terms as the Irish; and it is very desirable that a practice which seems to want nothing but an introduction, should be introduced. Whenever it shall become a more general fashion for Highland proprietors to reside, and to extend

to their tenantry, that kindness, protection, or advice, which they are asserted to have done in the former days of clanship and independence, other consequences than the grunting of pigs and the smoking of bacon are likely to follow.

From what I have witnessed in Orkney, and in hands that knew full well how to calculate agricultural returns, I am inclined to think that, in many of the Western Islands, the cultivation of rabbits might be advantageous. Small islands form the most convenient and secure warrens; and, in many such cases, these animals would occupy the pastures more advantageously and completely than either cattle or sheep; while the labour and risk of transport twice a year would be saved. Such is the case, in particular, with the remoter small islands; such as the Flannan, where the sheep scarcely pay the expense of carriage, North Barra, which, from its distance, is quite unoccupied, and innumerable islands about all the coasts, so small as not to be worth occupying, even by sheep. It is an additional convenience with respect to rabbits in such places, that they feed readily on sea weed, and are little affected by wet and stormy weather, which is so injurious to sheep; as they can make shelter for themselves. While the peltry of this produce is of easy transport and in steady demand, the carcases would form no unsatisfactory addition to the miserable catalogue of a Highland tenant's food. But what can be expected from these poor creatures, when their betters are content to go on in the old way; little anxious to increase their comforts, and, after they have made one or two of those great efforts to improvement which are almost forced on them by the progress of the country, unwilling to be at the trouble of thinking again on the subject, or of striving to improve upon improvement.

Common poultry forms a part of almost every tenant's establishment, however small; and the fowls are inmates of the house, always partaking the fire in wet weather with the other two legged inhabitants, as well as with the snoring and useless curs. The people might advantageously raise much more than they do, if they would be at the trouble of cultivating additional potatoes. Owing to their ready access to heat, the fowls lay equally well in winter as in summer, as I remarked on a late occasion. When they do not lay, indeed, it is in the time of harvest, to the great distress of gentlemen travellers; as it is usual to tether them by the legs to a tree, a plough, or a cart, and thus to starve them to prevent them from depredating on the corn. Southern tourists will also be amused to see them cased in gloves, or boots, or stockings, to prevent them from destroying the new-laid thatch. When not the object of sale, they are a medium of rent in the shape of kain fowls, as are the eggs. Recently, however, higgling vessels have begun to make periodical voyages through the maritime Highlands; collecting them principally for the markets of Glasgow and Greenock; and raising the price to double the former one, greatly to the benefit of the people.

It would be well for the small tenants if they would learn to pay the same attention to ducks and geese; as both of these will consume and thrive on much natural food that, for want of such consumers, is wasted. Both are rare, but geese most so; while perhaps they would be found the most valuable animal of the two. Small wastrels of grass are inseparable from these rough lands and from the system of small farming; and, at present, the produce of these is useless. Pools and lakes are found everywhere, and the interminable sea coasts are peculiarly adapted to these animals; though I do not

recommend you to eat them without some other preparation: it is enough to smell them at the fire. Whether fishy duck, fishy goose, or fishy pig, is the most savoury dish, I am somewhat at a loss to judge, after having tried them all; but the Porco Pesce is certainly a worse morsel than his Italian namesake. As to the Long Island, it seems to have been created on purpose for them; yet I doubt if there are a hundred to be found from Harris to Barra Head. Any tenant might rear them to an unlimited amount, and geese in particular; without any expense, and indeed without any land, by using them, as is common in many parts of England, to fly abroad in the day for food and return at night. Pigeons would soon be starved in this country. As to turkies, those who imagine that a rainy climate is destructive to them, as is commonly thought, may as well be told that no larger or more thriving flocks exist in Scotland than in the wettest and windiest districts; in Arasaik, for example, and in Glen Elg.

It only remains to add a few remarks on the improvement of pasture lands. The mountain pastures, which form by far the larger portion, are, of course, nearly beyond the reach of art. Where heath abounds, burning, in the spring season, and the grazing of sheep, form the only improvements of which they are susceptible; but by these, great tracts of brown or moory land have been rendered green, with a consequent great augmentation of value. The present condition of the southern hills of Scotland, once as brown as those of the Highlands, will shew how much may yet be expected from the continuance of a system which has not yet operated long enough to produce its full effects. In the lower lying moorlands, much more than is anticipated might be effected by draining; and this, in fact, rather than attempting to

make land arable, is the great system of improvement which the Highlands both demand and admit. Where this has been tried, as in Jura and Isla, the success has justified the expense; but very little indeed has been done if we take the country throughout. Of lands easily susceptible of it from their disposition, and where the profit would be unquestionable, I cannot easily call to mind a better example than Lewis. The expense of drainage is, of course, the great obstacle, where want of capital is the leading bar to improvement. The necessary extent of most systems of drainage would compel the proprietor to make the improvement himself; there not being many cases where the confined powers of tenants can do more than improve the very narrow spots which they intend for cultivation. Yet there are many places where the advantage of a general drainage might be obtained by means even of the smallest tenants; and without encroaching on their other avocations, as they have always much spare time. If, in the laying out of a large estate, whether in chief farms or small crofts, a system of drainage was to be designed at the same time, so that a portion of it should be rendered a duty, or corvée, on each lot, the whole would be effected with little expense or inconvenience, and without oppression; since every individual, as well as the estate at large, would ultimately be a gainer, not only by his own labour, but by that of the whole, thus cooperating for a general and beneficial end. The same reasoning may be applied to plans of irrigation; the advantages of which I have suggested on different occasions, when pointing out the beautiful verdure of Canna, St. Kilda, and other places, where the inclination of the land causes a perpetual flow along the surface, of that water which the clouds incessantly discharge upon them.

I know not whether it is to the state of natural drainage or irrigation, or to some peculiar property in the sea air, but it is remarkable, that, on all the sea-shores, the pastures, to a certain distance inland, are green and unencumbered with heath. This line of verdure often follows every indentation and inlet in a very striking manner, forming a green belt round the whole. In these cases the soil is generally peaty, though not very wet; lying on rock or gravel, or, more rarely, on clay; but as it approaches the shore, the rushes, heath, and coarse grasses, which alone it bears in the interior, disappear; a green pasture succeeding, capable of producing corn, and a very general object of cultivation. When speaking hereafter of the agriculture, properly so called, of the Highlands, I shall have more particular occasion to remark the neglect which the smaller tracts of meadow and enclosed pasture experience; the tenants seeming to have concluded that these were as intractable as the greater wild pastures, and therefore neglecting the most obvious means of improvement.

Though the effect of calcareous manures on the black mossy pasture lands is highly beneficial, converting them at once to green, the expense prevents the application of these to any great extent, at least in the hands of the large tenants; from whom every project of this nature demands an outlay of capital, the return for which will not, in all cases, justify its expenditure, even if it could be commanded. The same remark may be made on ploughing or scarifying the surface so as to turn the turf over; by which process alone the brown pasture is destroyed and a green one induced, while the feeding of sheep or cattle subsequently, prevents it from returning to its original state. But, paradoxical as it may at first sight appear, the small tenants might advantageously

make improvements of this nature which are inaccessible to the large ones, or unattainable under a regular and well-conducted system of farming. Even the ordinary culture of the small tenantry could not be carried on by any other class; as the expense at which it is conducted is, in fact, enormous, though it does not appear in the farmer's accounts. It is not too much to say that their oats and potatoes are raised at three or four times the cost that they are in the low country, and that if the produce were to be offered for sale at a just price, it would be unsaleable. This arises from the want of sufficient occupation, as well for the labour of the people as of the horses and capital in general. Under a proper system, the unoccupied capital would be chargeable on the produce; and it is only to extend the same reasoning to the proposed improvements of the pasture lands. Thus the small tenants, by a due and gradual application of that labour which is now unoccupied, or of that time which is spent in idleness, might gradually improve their pastures, as they have recovered from the waste their arable lands. From them, no outlay of capital is required, and they would unquestionably be recompensed for their labour. It is true, that, having no leases, they have neither temptation nor security for improvement, according to popular opinion. But I have a better opinion of Highland landlords than to consider this as a valid objection: and after all that has been written or said about oppression and the raising of rents, I sincerely believe that the smallest tenant at rack rent, as they all virtually are, has as good security as can be desired, if he conducts himself well; and that, thus improving his lot, he would be encouraged instead of being charged for his own exertions.

It is not very long since I found a man in one of the islands, building a good slated house with two stories,

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that could not have cost less than three or four hundred pounds. On asking him what lease he had of his lands to venture on such a project, I received the usual answer: he had not even a formal verbal promise for any fixed time, but relied on the character of his landlord and the fashion of the country. Not that I think the practice a proper one, nor one that proprietors should encourage; because curators, executors, or trustees, who must act according to law, might often be compelled to proceed in a manner from which the proprietor himself would have shrunk.

Whatever may be judged respecting the above suggestion, it must be remembered, that, under circumstances of equal difficulty and in periods of less enterprise, many of the present pastures and cultivated lands of Britain in general, have been rescued from heath and barrenness: nor is there any reason to doubt that, at some distant day, many of the mountain and moorland pastures of the Highlands that now frown in dismal barrenness, will put on the verdant and comparatively smiling aspect of "pleasant Tiviotdale" and Yarrow. How different an appearance the dreary surfaces of Mull, of Sky, and of Lewis, would assume under this change, is easily conceived.

I find from an answer to my last letter, that I am in danger of being misunderstood in what I have there said about a Highland kingdom: "obscurus quia brevis." The Western Highlanders were, politically, a Norwegian people: that the Chiefs were such is proved by their genealogies, history, and possessions. Their situation towards Scotland was similar to that of the early Normans to France. Their feudal dependance on Norway was unsteady and imperfect; yet the dominion was a feudal one. It has appeared that they occasionally threw off

their allegiance to Scotland after 1266, but that independence was irregular and incomplete. In that state they again resemble Normandy, in having no longer any connexion with their original country. Such was the independent kingdom of the Islands. It had the right to have preserved that independence better and longer; but it seems to have wanted the power. The independence of the interior Highlands was far less perfect; and, as far as history can discover, was never more than that of distinct families or dynasties. There was here no such general union or extended dominion as in the west. I am also correct in saying that the Celts, or the original inhabitants of the Western Islands, or of somewhat more, were a governed people. They also stand on a parallel with the French of Normandy, or with the Britons under the Heptarchy. With the Scottish people and kingdom that conquered the Picts under Kenneth and founded a new kingdom of Scotland, this sketch does not intermeddle, and this view does not interfere. If that is to be considered a Highland kingdom, then assuredly it was an independent one from Fergus to Kenneth. In that case there have been two distinct Highland kingdoms, at different dates, and of different characters. But it has not been the custom to call the kingdom of Fergus a Highland kingdom.

NORTH UIST. HOSPITALITY. PEAT.

After leaving Benbecula, I dreamed all night that I was a wild duck, a fish, a frog, or a crocodile; "one foot on sea and one on shore;" scarcely satisfied, even when awake, whether the amphibious things I had passed through were sober reality or not. But Rona assured me it was all a truth; for there again I saw all that I had seen before, and more; things more amphibious, more dazzling, more strange, more intricate, and more incredible than ever. This is a high rocky island, and, from its name, must have been celebrated for seals. In former days, seal fishing, or hunting, was a common and profitable occupation in all the islands; and in some, they seem to have been exceedingly abundant. The great seal has now nearly disappeared, and the common one is so scarce as not to be worth a systematical pursuit. They seem, however, as fond of music as ever; following our boat, and pushing their round black shining heads above water, as the men amused themselves with whistling to them. If I was a Bentley or a Brunck, I would write a folio to prove that it was a seal and not a dolphin that carried Arion.

I was very near paying them a visit here in their own submarine groves, to the great consternation of my boat's crew. I have often been near drowning, but never so foolishly and unjustifiably. If ever sea nymphs or kelpies smiled to deceive, it was when they enticed me into that tempting cave in Rona. Learn to distrust their

smiles: when they bluster and roar you require no warning. All was gay, and bright, and smooth, and green; yet the sea, which seemed as if it had gone to rest for ever, was gently heaving in a long-measured swell that no eye could discover. The cave was long and low, and the roof shelved down till it met the water. On a sudden we were lifted up and carried on till our heads struck the roof; and the space was instantly filled by the sea. It was the work of an instant to push back; and that instant, had we failed, would have consigned us to the shells and corals below, to sleep for ever "under the glassy, cool, translucent wave," beyond even the reach of conjecture. "Eh sirs," said Neill, as the long surge swept us out again, "wha would ha' thought it." It is a good quiet sort of sea, says Solon, if the winds would let it alone. His worship never visited caves probably. Butler is nearer the mark, when he says, that, in one way or other, ships and boats have made ample amends for all those they saved at the Deluge.

Loch Maddy, in North Uist, forms an excellent harbour. There is one advantage in a shower in this country, that you are not kept waiting in fretful expectation, wondering how long it will be before you are wet through. The business is completed in five minutes, and you are at peace for the day. After that, whatever falls is so much rain wasted; it affects you no more than it does the sea. This is the true secret of that contempt of rain for which I had so often admired the Highlanders: a wet jacket, like some pains and all pleasures, is more in the expectation than in the reality. It is also true, soberly and philosophically. To be half wet is to be chilled; but a thoroughly drenched coat checks the partial and cold evaporation. Hence the warmth of the soaked plaid. The Highland practice is correct. It

was in such a shower, which stung as if it had been small shot, that I lost all sense of sight and hearing, and found myself by a kettle of potatoes boiling over a good peat fire, attended by a draggled cock and two dirty hens; having tumbled down through the unfinished roof, like Jupiter in the pantomine, and looking very like one of the River Gods in Tooke's Pantheon. Shortly however came in the owner and his little girl, not a bit drier than the chickens which formed his whole domestic establishment. Man wants but little here below, and our Hysker friend seemed to want nothing but the other half of his roof. But perhaps he had not had time to finish it, or he did not expect it would rain, or else he did not care for rain, or he thought half a roof enough for himself, his child, and the three chickens. He was a fine, handsome, good-natured fellow, however; so we ate his potatoes and made him as happy as possible.

This is the true Highland hospitality, never boasted of, yet never failing. In all the wilds I ever visited, I never yet entered the blackest hut without having what was to be given, the best place by the fire, the milk-tub, the oat-cake, the potatoes, the eggs, if it was possible to persuade the hens to do such a deed, and a glass of whisky if it was to be found. All this too seems quite matter of right, not of favour. But my Hysker friend, like many others, had never heard of hospitality: when once the term has crept in, the virtue is too apt to creep out, as happens in the case of many other virtues where this sort of paper currency has found a footing. It was once the universal character of the country.

Wi routh o' kin and routh o' reek
My daddy's door it would na steek
But bread and cheese were his door-cheek
And girdle-cakes the rigging o't.

Pray admire the elegance of my choice in poetical quotation. You shall not skip it, as every one skips those little grey islands of poetry that are so fond of floating about in seas of bad prose. The poet seems to have formed the same notion of the indications of hospitality as Horace, when he says of a miser: "rem suam periisse, suo tigillo fumus si qua exit foras." This is really the character of the country people still; at least where they have heard nothing of Englishmen and tour books. As to their betters, who have heard of these things, whether it is from some other cause, or that they have been flattered into a belief of their exclusive possession of this virtue, there are too many who now either overrate its value and shun it, or take ample care to show that they are fully sensible of its importance and their own merits. This complaint indeed is more than a century old. Birt was not an unjust judge; his impartiality, I verily believe, may be admitted; and he tells us that "there is one gasconade of the people hereabouts which is extraordinary. They are often boasting of the great hospitality of the Highlanders to strangers," and so on; proceeding to quote some of his own experience on this subject, which may be paralleled at present on any day. The kindness of the well-educated, of those who have thus ceased to be national, is another matter, and there can be few who have not experienced it. But the simple question here is, how far this is now a national virtue: and if the features of a nation are to be sought among the lower classes, I suppose I have thus proved that hospitality is still a part of the Highland character: while I do not see why the curmudgeons among the higher who have forfeited their rights to it, should claim credit to themselves for that which is paid for out of my Hysker friend's potatoe-kettle. The potatoe-kettle never

yet failed me. As to the rest, whoever chooses to try, must draw his own conclusions. Were I to make that which is proverbially odious, I should say that this virtue actually flourishes in Orkney and Shetland as it is said to do in the Highlands. The fashions of your friend Magnus Troil have been mollified, of course; but the feeling is the same. Such, I doubt not, the Highlands once were: it is not the only point on which they have lost what the former have preserved.

But this subject deserves another word or two; though I am not going, like a German Professor, to give you a treatise on hospitality, commencing with Adam or Abraham. If there was an ancient Highland hospitality, as we are assured, it must have been founded on the same feelings as among the Germans and Gauls, or a part of that habit which prevailed among these people; with whom it was equal to sacrilege, as Tacitus says, to shut the door on a stranger. This is the hospitality of the Jews, of the Arabs, and of the Orientals in general; among whom it was a practice, and in times not barbarous, even to wash the stranger's feet. I need not quote a Divine remonstrance in proof of this custom. Nor was it limited to rank. In Athenæus, the daughters of Cocalus King of Sicily conduct Dœdalus to the bath. If the Highlanders boast that they did not ask the stranger's name, equally polite, as I formerly remarked, are the American tribes and the Arabs: and Homer, in speaking of Nausicaa, and elsewhere, also notices that the name was not asked till after the repast; because the security of the guest had then been established by the libation; by the bread and salt and wine. Yet it does not very clearly appear how the ancient Highlanders could have exercised much of this general hospitality, when almost every clan was at feud with another; and

how they treated strangers who had the misfortune to come among them, is well known from various tales, never contradicted, which I shall be obliged to notice hereafter.

Be that as it may, this is that barbarous hospitality, as it has been called, which it is admitted that commerce and civilization destroy; to the vast comfort of all parties. Yet it was not thus destroyed in civilized Greece and Rome, even in the latest and worst of times; and, among their many faults of social life, these people may well claim the praise of an hospitality as little known to Highlanders as to Lowlanders or Englishmen. The Greeks founded Hospitia. Alexander, on this subject, says that all good men are relations. Ælian relates a law of Lucania by which those who refused admittance to a stranger after sun-set were fined. It is in no very good period of Greece that Lucian goes with a letter of introduction to the house of a noted miser, where, nevertheless, he and his servant are warmly received and a good supper provided for him; where he is pressed to stay, and dares not even accept another invitation lest he should offend his host. This was Greek hospitality. The Romans even exceeded them. They also founded Hospitia; and all strangers were received and feasted indiscriminately during the Lectisternia. Livy calls that law an execrable violation of the rights of humanity, by which the Achæans refused to receive any Macedonian. All the great families of Rome, as is well known, made it their boast to receive all those who were recommended to them, strangers as well as friends; and Cicero warmly praises this practice, particularly as it regarded foreigners. It was the same in the Roman cities and towns. Cicero also calls the King of the Gods Jupiter hospitalis; besides which, all strangers and guests were under the

care of the Dii viales, Venus, Minerva, Castor, Pollux, and Hercules. Such was Roman hospitality: such was Greek hospitality. This admits of no dispute: it was the virtue of civilized not of barbarous life.

But after all, the law of civil life is, that he who eats his neighbour's dinner gives an equivalent, at least, in his society: politeness says that he confers the favour; and really, in the Highlands, politeness apart, he who has seen nothing but calves and stots and drovers for six months, gains something more than an equivalent for his mutton and his kindness, in the visit of the unlucky and ill-advised stranger who gives up his time and his freedom for a dinner. But I have another word yet to say in defence of the hospitality of the lower classes of Highlanders, if others have not found it what I have. If it has been diminished by the money which English travellers lavish, often grumbling and lavishing at the same time, and if the Highlanders have thus adopted, in too many places, the maxim of "no penny no paternoster," so it has been checked by the frequency of visitors in these latter days. Thus it may have become an inconvenience; as it has become less needed, from the establishment of inns: while it has naturally also withdrawn itself, as these visits ceased to be a novelty. Most of all, perhaps, it has suffered from the supercilious manners and the affectation of superior wealth and superiority of all kinds, too common with the swarms of idle and pert young men, often vulgar cockneys and students, who visit this country, and who, from their ignorance of the manners and feelings of the people, display conduct alike contemptuous and contemptible. The Highlander is acute in his judgment, of sense and of manners equally; and his own manners, though his coat be bare and his house dark, might often shame those who look down on him with

this narrow-bred assumption of superiority. The hospitality of the poorest Highlander is the gift of friendship, as well as of respect; and if it is not that of equality, it will not bear neglect, any more that it expects payment. It is not wonderful that it should learn to retire within itself: but he who will sit down by the fire with the wives and grandmothers, listen, whether he understands it or not, to the price of cattle, notice the children, and answer the questions which may be asked, without choosing to imagine that they are the produce of impertinence, will be thought a "fine man" and a "good gentleman;" nor will he be in any danger of suffering an infringement of his imaginary dignity. He who is thus far the gentleman he would fain hope, may travel from the Dan to the Beersheba of this country, from the Mull of Cantyre to Cape Rath, whenever he pleases, and will have little reason to complain of want of hospitality among the Highland people.

I suppose, by this time, that you will have classed me with the "friends of the people." I can only say with Mr. Shandy, Dinah is my aunt, I respect Plato, and so on. I ought now, like Gay, who gives the moral first and the fable afterwards, to add the illustrations. On the negative side, that might prove worse than the business of the leeks and cabbages and Berigonium: the good will come to light here and there. Nevertheless I will give you the journal of one day; because it produced that effect which lawyers like you love, of leaving judgment suspended. Besides, it is characteristic.

Did you yourself not say, in the account of Crichton Castle, that the days, lamented days, were gone, when, if a stranger passed over the lands of a Chief without presenting himself at the castle to do homage or ask permission, he was clapped into the dungeon-pit till it

pleased the toads to devour him. No such thing, my very good Sir Walter. I was about to traverse the sublime territories of the great Mac Mhic Jan Roy Vohr, situated on the mainland of Scotland, in the territory of the Cernotes, or Carini, or Cerones, or Carnonacæ, it matters not, when I was informed that I could not pass his house without waiting on him, or affronting him. I pleaded ignorance of the Great Grandson of the Great Red John, and many another plea; in vain. Less courageous however than William Tell, I at length submitted to make my bow to the governor's hat. I rode on, I passed the wolds, I stood on the narrow esplanade which intervened between the solid walls and the draw-bridge; the ponderous bell was in my hand, as the Giant himself issued from the portal. Homage being duly paid, and fame having outrun my own speed, I was received with all due state and magnificence. The ancient hospitality was modernized, it is true; but we cannot be alive now and three hundred years ago at the same time. But the hour soon came, since it came next day, for me to take leave of the Great Grandson of the Great Red John. It blew a gale of wind, it rained torrents, all the rivers were swollen and impassable, (there were no bridges you will please to recollect, as this was "sixty years since,") and to add to all these evils, there was a sea-ferry between this castle and that of the next Baron, without a horse-boat, a mile broad, and exposed to all the fury of the waves and the gale. I very humbly stated these difficulties. "Was it possible to pass all these obstructions." "I think—yes—probably you may." And if I am drowned or obliged to sleep in the heath, it seems to concern thee very little, most worthy descendant of the Great Jan Roy. I rode off; manfully determined to go and sleep at the Great Red John's inn. But as I turned

an angle of the road, the very vision himself stood before me. I wheeled to the right about, and left Mhic Mac Jan Roy Vohr to ruminate on his own dignity. The Mic Macs of North America would not have put a wolf out of doors in such a day. I arrived at a river: it was rolling a torrent; impassable; as the great Jan Roy well knew. I espied a house and rode up to it. I was ushered into a goodly company of gentlemen and ladies who had just dined. I was pressed to dine—to stay all night—to take wine—whisky—every thing. My name was not even asked. I expressed a wish to proceed. They would be delighted if I staid; but it was no kindness to detain me to my own inconvenience. This was true Highland land: why is it not always so; that we may be able to say that so it always is.

They showed me a ford; the ford was passed, and I arrived at the shore of the very ferry itself. The long rolling swell of the western ocean, whitened by the gale, was roaring into the mouth of this formidable channel; it was a frightful sea. Is it here that I am to swim my horse, thou great Mhic Mac. I looked in the pony's face; he was unappalled: it is a fine thing to be ignorant of futurity. But I was directed to some Mac or other; so that I settled with myself to be invited for the night and to swim for it in the morning. It proved a she Mac. "Every body is welcome here that comes from the great Jan Roy," said the lady. And why not for my own sake and distresses, thought I; call you this hospitality. "This letter desires me to get you across the ferry," said the stately dame.—"True; but I do not think the ferry is passable to-night, Madam; it blows hard, and there is a great sea in the Firth."—"Oh, ne'er ye mind, Donald is canny and your horse can swim."—"Yes, but as he is not my own, I think I would rather try to-morrow."—

"Jan Roy desires me to put ye across the ferry"—said the inflexible vassal of the great Mac Mhic Jan Roy Vohr. "Here, lassie, riu awa down to the shore and tell Donald get his coble—there is a stranger from Jan Roy and he maun put him owre the ferry." The coble just held myself and the boatman; the sea boiled and broke along the Firth—a rope was knotted round the neck of the gallant grey, who pawed and snorted like a porpoise, puffing out of his distended nostrils a shower of wind and water. "Haud him weel up," said Donald, "haud him up, man"—thou art food for the fishes, thought I—puff away, my brave boy. I let go the last ounce of breath which I had reserved for the catastrophe of this adventure, as we came into an eddy of smoother water. Why this Baronial Red John with his villainous pronomens and cognomens would have turned King Lear himself out in the storm, had he been his own father; and the she imp his vassal would have set the foxhounds after him too, had she been ordered. But this was "sixty years since," and we must suppose that things are improved.

They improved in a few hours. As I mounted a great dreary hill, the thick heavy clouds rolled in from the ocean, while a dun-coloured gleam streamed through their lower edges, as, becoming gradually more and more indefinite, they marched on, swift yet silent, over the broad sea. In a minute all was thick rain and dark mist; and when I had passed the summit of the mountain I could only know that I was descending, but into what I knew not; since all, about, above, and below, was storm and cloud and darkness. It might be the sea: the cliffs were all around me, and I heard its sullen roar against them, contending with the pattering of the rain and the whistling of the wind along the heath. On a sudden my

horse made a dead stop. It is the edge of the cliff—it is a gate, said the horse, as he pushed it off its rude support with his nose. "Who is there," said the most welcome voice that ever saluted the ears of benighted mortal—"I have a letter"—"Never mind your letter, come in out of the shower." And now having given you the moral and the fable, I leave you and Mr. Humboldt to sweep a general conclusion. Here the scale trembles on its balance. I throw in the potatoe kettle of my Hysker friend, and it comes down with a bounce. Thus the balance is favourable: but to conclude universally either way, is to commit the old fault of drawing national, without a sufficient attention to personal, character.

North Uist is the sole property of Lord Macdonald, and having been allotted according to the modern system of crofting, it presents an air of comfort which we look for in vain where this system has not yet been established. The culture lies chiefly toward the west side, where the soil is dry and sandy and the ground undulating. A large portion of it is a flat black bog, interspersed with lakes and pools like Benbecula, and intersected by the sea in such a manner that probably more than one third of the area is water. The great inlets of Loch Macphail, Loch Eport, and Loch Maddy, with their extensive ramifications, occupy the chief part of the watery surface. From Heval, as far as the eye can well reach, the whole appears one uniform flat, in which the black land and the bright water are so equally intermixed, that it is difficult to say which predominates. As there are not less than a hundred square miles of this inextricable labyrinth, all at once detailed as in a map under the eye, it is easy to imagine what a strange sight it presents. The brilliancy of the water probably causes that portion to appear greater than it really is. Unac-

customed to objects of this character on a large scale, the first impression is that of looking at some little portion of a flat heath after a day's rain, when the tufts of grass and rushes are swimming or insulated among the dripping channels that surround them. Even when the vastness of the whole scene produces a conviction of the fact, it is scarcely possible to imagine that we see great lakes stored with fish, and arms of the sea which boats can navigate.

While the deep incisions of the sea extend far into the country, ramifying into a thousand branches, the intermediate flat is crowded with uncountable lakes, some fresh, and others occasionally admitting salt water. It is in vain for the eye to attempt to discover what is a lake and what an inlet; and I need not say that North Uist is here impassable by any ingenuity. All this brown land is low and boggy, producing some miserable herbage in summer, but, in winter, the property of wild ducks, geese, swans, and sea gulls, to whom a great part of Lord Macdonald's estate is thus consigned rent free. The nature and extent of the sinuosities of these sea lochs, is better understood from the survey of Loch Maddy, the general area of which is contained within a circumference of about ten miles, while the lineal measure of its outline is two hundred. As these quiet seas are particularly favourable to the growth of sea weeds, North Uist forms the most valuable kelp estate in the Highlands; its maritime returns being, I believe, as considerable as its terrestrial. The mean annual produce of Loch Maddy alone, is 300 tons; a quantity that requires 7200 tons of weed: that of the whole island, is about 1400.

North Uist, like all the Long Island, is noted for the peculiar excellence of its peat. It is here so compact as

to be unaffected by water when once dried, very dense and heavy, and burning with a glow of heat and a bright flame almost equal to coal, so as nearly to supersede the necessity of any other light in the cottages. The depth is also very great, varying from ten even to twenty feet. The superior quality arises from the moisture of the soil and the climate, whence follows the thorough decomposition of the vegetables from which it is formed. Notwithstanding all the contradictory matter that has been brought forward, and the long-winded volumes which have been written on this most simple subject, I hope I need scarcely tell you that peat is the produce of vegetables, decomposed, not putrified. Hence it belongs exclusively to regions and situations that are moist and not of too high a temperature. It may be formed of any plant whatever that will grow and die in such places, and therefore it is not the produce of trees only, as has been often said. In the seats of ancient forests, it is often found, partially formed at least, if not entirely, from decayed wood: but it is far more common in low marshy grounds, and on the borders of lakes where trees never grew, and it occurs also in the wet parts of mountain declivities and open moorlands, as well as in flat or marshy tracts on the sea shore. It is also subject to be transferred from place to place when in a fluid state; and hence it may be distinguished into varieties, to which may be applied the names of, mountain, forest, marsh, lake, maritime, and transported peat.

Peat is always more compact below than above, because the decomposition of the plants is there most complete: it grows, not because it is a living substance, as has been idly said, but because the plants which produce it are always growing; the annuals dying to be reproduced from seeds, the perennials shedding, at every

season, something to add to the heap. But if once thoroughly pared and laid bare, the growth ceases, as no seeds can easily attach themselves to it; and now that this is understood, the pared surface is removed and again replaced on that of the cavity whence it has been dug. In land so formed as to permit its being drained, it is firm: if otherwise, it becomes a semi-fluid paste or soft bog. It is from this cause that such bogs are rare in the Highlands, and almost always of small extent; the form of the country in general, being such as to admit of its easy drainage. It is from these fluid bogs that the eruptions, such as that of Solway Moss and the recent ones in Ireland, proceed; and thus peat occasionally finds its way to places where it would not have grown.

Mountain peat, if formed on the declivities of hills, or, what amounts to the same thing, on dry moorlands, is rarely more than a foot in depth, and frequently not many inches. It is generally of an incompact texture, and often, very imperfect; containing a large proportion of half decomposed vegetables. From its state of drainage, it is generally easy to bring it into cultivation; but its fertility is much regulated by the extent of its decomposition and by the fineness and laxity of its texture. The plants which form it, are chiefly the usual heaths and rushes of these soils. Where Forest peat is pure, it is easily known by its flaky texture, even if there should be no roots or fragments of trees present. The wood is commonly that of fir; sometimes also, birch, alder, and oak. But, in general, this peat is of a mixed quality; being formed conjointly, of the fragments and trunks of trees, and of the plants which grow under their shade or have succeeded on the swampy spots which usually follow the destruction of a wood in a mountainous country. Marsh peat is among the most noted, both for its extent

and depth, and because it includes some of the largest tracts which have been brought into cultivation. Our most extensive Mosses may be ranked in this division; and it is in this variety that the pale moss, the Sphagnum, which has been ignorantly supposed the only source of peat, sometimes performs a conspicuous part. All the plants of wet soils, however, forming a long list with which I need not trouble you, conspire towards its production. It is in this kind that the whole progress from the living vegetable to the very compact and inorganic peat is most easily traced, and from which the most satisfactory evidence of the nature of the whole process is obtained. Marsh peat affords also the greatest supply and the best kind of fuel.

In nature, it is not always easy to distinguish Lake peat from that of marshes; because a marsh is often the consequence of the filling of a lake; so that, in the end, the two become united. But in the early stage, the difference is apparent enough; while the process, in this case, is peculiarly interesting. It commences on the shallow margins, and generally at the mouths of the estuaries, by means of the subaquatic plants, Scirpus, Subularia, Lobelia, and many others. Deposits of gravel and mud accelerate the shoaling of the water, so that reeds and rushes find a lodgment; and thus, in no long time, a solid bog, or, in some cases, a turfy one, takes the place of the water, and the lake is converted into land. The different stages of this process may easily be seen at the entrances of the rivers into all our great lakes; and no where perhaps more advantageously than at Loch Tumel, where it is visible that a large portion of the valley has thus been recovered from the water. In many places, as at the Lochs of the Lowes, the result is, to separate one lake into two; and this happens especially when a stream

is received at the side. In a similar manner may a maritime inlet be converted into a fresh-water lake; as I have pointed out in preceding parts of these letters. Under varying circumstances, that land may be a meadow instead of a peat moss. Thus, among many other modes, does nature contract the range of her aquatic creation to extend that of her terrestrial one. Hence also it is that beds of marl are so often found beneath peat. These are the remains of the shell fish that once inhabited the water; and thus, where they are found, we may be sure that the peat bog was once the seat of a lake. The same considerations may often lead to the valuable discovery of marl where it was not suspected. Wherever a flat peat moss is included in a basin and gives passage to a river, it may be presumed that it was formerly a lake; and, on digging, marl beds will often be found beneath it, or interstratified with the peat, and occasionally with gravel. This is a valuable piece of knowledge to agriculturists, though it has been entirely overlooked by the voluminous and endless writers who have gone on to this day puzzling this very simple subject.

The formation of Maritime peat is analogous to that of lake peat; and the effects are also analogous; the result of the shoaling being, first a salt marsh, and lastly a meadow. The foundation is often laid by the Zostera, sometimes by the common sea weeds; and the process is continued by the semi-maritime inhabitants of salt marshes, till the land is finally raised beyond the reach of the sea, so as to become a meadow. I know of no place where the whole process through all its stages can be more easily traced than in the Firth of Forth above Culross: it is also visible in Loch Tarbet; and, at some future day, Barra and Vatersa will thus become united. In Holland, from the peculiarity of its situation, the common submarine

Fuci are a frequent ingredient of peat. Transported peat must necessarily be of a very perfect nature, because it can only be fluid in consequence of the diffusion of a powdery matter through water. It abounds in the northern parts of Europe, where it forms deep and extensive trembling bogs. In Scotland it is rare, and generally confined to small spots; the casual receptacles of water draining from masses of Mountain peat.

As I have suppressed the botany of peat, so I must be brief respecting its chemistry and geology. Yet, as a subject still unexplained, it deserves a few words, though somewhat out of the bounds of my agreement. Yet there is no necessity for being so rigid, when even our ladies are now chemists and geologists. I fear it is but a bad compliment to them to shun all the "hard words."

By the action of water on the vegetable matter, a portion of the hydrogen is dissipated, and the result is a new compound of Hydrogen and Carbon. It is not unlike that produced by fire; of which roasted coffee is an example. Thus the Papyri of Herculaneum have been "roasted" or carbonized, by water, not by fire: they are in the state of peat. The exact nature of this change is easily ascertained by chemical analysis. There is here an approximation to the condition of bitumen, and thus to coal: but it is no more. When forests, or peat of far higher antiquity, are found at greater depths in the earth, the bituminization is well marked, though still incomplete. The antiquity is proved by the strata that lie above, and the substance is then Lignite; including Cologne earth, Bovey coal, and Jet. This substance may be considered a mixture of peat and coal, or a transition between the two, retaining the vegetable forms. The last change is to Coal. This, in a similar manner, is proved to be a substance of far higher antiquity than Lignite. And that

such is its origin, is also proved, geologically, by the exact resemblance of its disposition among the strata, to that of peat among beds of sand and marl, and by the certainty that it has been formed under fresh water and in marshes; as it contains only fresh-water shells and terrestrial vegetables. It is proved chemically, because by mere change of form, jet becomes coal. Coal beds are therefore the peat mosses of an ancient world. I leave you to hatch this egg into a quarto volume.

To this quintessence of the natural history of peat, I may add a sketch as simple respecting its agriculture; an object of such importance, that it is perhaps no wonder if it has been detailed in as many volumes as it might have been contained in words. After the innumerable experiments that have been made, and the endless treatises that have been written, the whole question resolves itself into this. It can bear no crops if it is wet, it will give no passage to the roots of plants if it is compact. The remedies are simple: draining and loosening. If wet, draining is the first requisite; not only for the most obvious reason, but to admit the tread of animals and the passage of the plough. Wet or dry, it must be pulverized, and, further, preserved in that state, or its fertility ceases. These are the bases of the system: how they are to be effected and at what expense, depend on the climate and situation. As to the effects of manure, lime, clay, and sand, they are easily understood. Where they do not merely operate in opening the soil, their utility may be reasoned of on general agricultural principles: in the fens of Ely no manure, except occasional burning, is ever required.

Though you should care little about such matters, it is a mere act of gratitude to bestow a few lines on that which has so often befriended us all, in these cold and

dripping regions. The very sight of a peat stack warms the heart; and when I see the great wall of black bricks nicely piled and squared, I figure to myself the many hours and days of comfort, which, as the logicians say, are lodged within it, "in posse." As it relates to the agricultural economy of the islands, and indeed of the Highlands in general, the question of peat assumes rather a graver cast. It is the sole article of fuel, as I need scarcely say, and the consumption of it is very great. Independently of the demand for cookery, the climate renders fire almost as necessary in summer as in winter. Taking the country throughout, the supply may be considered as inexhaustible; yet some islands, such as Tirey, Canna, Iona, and Muck, labour under serious inconveniences from the want of it. This defect adds considerably to the expenses of the tenant, and consequently detracts from the value of the land. But though peat is found at almost every man's door, we must not consider it as obtained for nothing. The labour of cutting, carrying, and saving, is so great, that there are few places where its value, thus estimated, is not far greater than that of imported coal in the same places. In Tirey, where it must be brought from Mull or Airdnamurchan, it has been computed to cost five times as much. Hence starts up a class of politicians to argue for the importation of coal, and for terminating the peat system. As usual in political economy, these philosophers busy themselves in damming up one hole while the stream is running out at another. That science is often like an eel; if it does not escape you by the head, it slips out by the tail. Peat, in fact, costs nothing to nine in ten of those who burn it; and thus one proposition seems to contradict another, simply because the politician only sees out of one eye. Under the present divided and minute agricultural system, there is no steady demand for labour: it is there-

fore comparatively a worthless commodity, and the peat, if not the exact wages of idleness, is the produce of that which can produce nothing else. Thus, to attempt the importation of coal, is to bring to market a commodity for which there is nothing to be given in exchange, because there is no existing occupation by which an exchangeable value can be generated. In the same manner, it has been proposed by Macdonald, who ought to have seen clearer, to establish a manufacture from the peat of the Long Island, for exportation to the islands where it is bad or deficient. Here we may again ask, where is the price to be found: if it were, the superiority of coal and the activity of an established commerce, would soon drive the peat manufacturers out of the market.

That opulent farmers, or gentlemen who reside on their estates, should still consume peat, when the labour of making it is computed at a third of the total expense of the farm, is sometimes the consequence of habit, at others of the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, with respect to carriage and to the employment of cotters and servants in place of hired labourers. Where this is remediable, it will remedy itself in time. But in the mean while, the small tenants must go on making and burning their peats in the old way. The system of the Highlands is not the best that could be desired, but it is at least consistent. Compulsion is the expedient of a blinking politician; often of something worse. The half-sighted economist, who imagines that he can repair a part without amending the whole, acts like him who should set up to reform Algiers by giving it a Mr. Hume and a Society for the Suppression of Vice, or to amend the police of New Zealand by sending out Townsend or Macmanus with a commission of "Corum, aye and Rotulorum" in his pocket.

NORTH UIST. STONE FORTS. PICTS HOUSES. SAND INUNDATIONS. ETYMOLOGIES OF THE ISLANDS.

THERE are many remains, here as everywhere else, of those Stone Forts commonly called Danish. I have rarely noticed them, because they generally offer nothing either to excite or gratify curiosity, and shall therefore now give you what little I have to say on the subject in as few words as possible. They are not limited either to the Islands or the sea coasts; but are found all over the interior of Scotland, and no where more abundantly than through Breadalbane, and thence eastward, and towards Atholl. This is, in itself, an argument against their merely Scandinavian origin. It has also been asserted that those which, in this country, are found situated on islands within lakes, as some of them are in this very island, were of Northern extraction, while those placed on eminences were British or native structures. The evidence for this opinion is, simply, nothing: and, on general principles, there is no reason for such a distinction. Cæsar indeed says that the Britons fortified themselves or their towns by woods; an assertion which Giraldus confirms when he informs us that the Irish had no forts, but defended themselves by marshes and ditches. Yet Cæsar's personal knowledge was slender: and when Giraldus says that it was the Ostmen who built the forts and the castles, he is only giving an opinion, not narrating a fact. This might or might not be, for aught that he can prove. As

every one must have a system of his own, Spenser says that the Danish forts are round, and the Saxon, square. In Ireland they were called Raths. Ledwich, who must have his separate opinion too, tries to distinguish these from the Duns. But there is no distinction. The Dun is that very species of fort, the Dinas of Wales and Cornwall. But I need quote no more opinions: it is to fill pages to no purpose. The subject being dark, it might indeed make a volume. But it is not the more important because antiquaries have squabbled about it. Precisely the reverse; as you will please to observe that this most irritable and abusive of all irritable and abusive races, is always most particularly nettlesome, rabid, and ill-mannered, when the matters under contention are most flocci-nihili-pilaceous. Just as there is no spite like that of the old maids of a country village about the quality of Mrs. Thingamy's caudle or the merits of rival apothecaries.

Systems of this nature are the systems of antiquaries, not of rude nations. But they are not the systems of such antiquaries as Roy and Folard. If the Britons and Danes had been as bad engineers as the antiquaries, they might indeed have been ignorant of the nature of a strong post or a defence, and persisted accordingly in systematic error. That they did vary the places and forms of their works according to the exigencies and nature of the ground, is most evident to those who know their fortification, in the field, and not in the closet. Had they done otherwise, they would have acted like the modern engineer who should transfer Lisle to Ehrenbreitstein, or construct a regular pentagon for the rocks of Stirling, because it is strong on paper or on the sands of Fort George. The variety of the Vitrified Forts alone, and the scientific military dispositions of these, are suffi-

cient to evince the knowledge and resources of a more distant, and probably ruder race than that which erected the Stone Forts. These, like others, were works of military necessity; and, whether foreign or native, may be expected to be found wherever a defence was wanting and a strong post existed. But the usages of all the northern tribes were so like, as were their weapons and mode of warfare, that there is no ground for assuming such differences in their modes of fortification, or for imagining that, at this distant day, we could distinguish between the works of the invaders and the invaded; particularly where, as in this country, they became often, and for a long time, confounded together in one joint population. But enough of a question no less trifling than hopeless.

These buildings are invariably erected without lime, and commonly in a rude manner, with unsquared and casual stones of all shapes. Had not the walls been of enormous thickness, they must long ago have all fallen down, as the greater number, in fact, have; while the Conical towers, built of flat stones and on better principles, have continued entire to this day where not ruined by violence. The shape is commonly round or oval; but where some particular form of ground rendered a departure from these forms convenient, they have not been followed. The walls, wherever I have examined them, vary from ten or twelve even to eighteen feet in thickness; but the height never seems to have much exceeded that of a man. In Isla, one of them has a step, or banquette, within; and there is a similar provision to one in Lismore; but these are the only instances of this construction that I have seen. In one or two cases also, Lismore containing one of the examples, there appears to have been a gallery within the mass of the wall, forming an approximation to the conical tower; unless this

ruin was really a portion of one of these very works. The dimensions are infinitely various; reaching from ten or twelve feet in diameter, even to fifty or sixty, or more. In one, in North Uist, the small island on which it stands, is connected by a solid causeway to the shore; and, in Aberdeenshire, where they occupy the summits of hills, they have often a similar access, strongly laid, like a Roman road, and extending for a considerable way down the hill. Some other variations may be observed; and in truth, so far from having been built on any regular plan, they present as much diversity as buildings so rude could well do. One of the most remarkable varieties, which I have not yet mentioned, is that in which they seem to have been divided into separate apartments; an instance of which occurs in Sky, and which are frequent in Orkney. That they were often citadels rather than military posts, intended for sheltering the families and cattle, or other property, of the warlike tribes of those days, seems the best conclusion that can be formed, from the construction and the positions of many of them, and particularly of the larger.

Yet the small ones could not have served that purpose; while the presence of a banquette implies offensive rather than passive defence: and in truth, misled by the rude construction and circular form, antiquaries have confounded under one general view and term, works which seem to have been designed for various purposes, and to have belonged, probably, to very different ages; just as they have introduced confusion into the circles of separate stones, by assigning them all, of whatever nature, to their favourite and, thus far, visionary Druids. This is a subject that would demand and admit of a separate discussion; but that must be founded, not on systems built under cover of a night gown and slippers, but on a

critical examination and comparison of specimens. I have no room here to do for the Stone forts what I have attempted for the Vitrified ones and the Pictish towers. It is too extensive a subject. But how far any single theory, either of their origin or uses, is likely to be universally applicable, may be judged from Castle an Dinas in Cornwall, misrepresented by Borlase, consisting of five concentric walls, the altitude of which, where they are absolutely complete, is only six feet, and where there is a ditch, eight; the thickest being twenty-eight, and the internal area a hundred and ninety-six, with a stone causeway like a Roman road, and built at an expense which, according to a regular architectural measurement and computation, would amount at present to £30,000.

I may pass over the single erect stones in this island, though one of them is remarkable for presenting the rare height of twenty feet. But it contains specimens of the Uaighs, or regular subterranean retreats, and of another singular kind of structure which Pennant seems to have confounded with these. Not long before my arrival here, a skeleton had been found in an erect posture in one of them; this unfortunate Celt having concealed himself somewhat too effectually. These hiding places, used, apparently, in times of sudden invasion, are in the form of wells, deep enough to contain a man; sometimes lined with stone, but, more commonly, mere pits, over which a turf was drawn till the alarm was over. They occur also in Isla and in other places; but from their nature, their discovery is always the result of accident, and cannot happen often. The Uaighs, or Picts' houses as they are sometimes called, are much more common; and as they have been the subject of misapprehension and dispute, they will demand a few words.

These structures are not strictly subterranean; the upper part, or interior ceiling of the vault, being, generally, nearly on a level with the surrounding ground, or not much depressed below it. If that were removed, they would appear like oblong shallow pits; and thus it is easy to see that they were formed by first making an open excavation. Their dimensions vary slightly in different places; but they range from ten to fourteen feet in length, and from six to ten in breadth; the height within being seldom more than four feet. The vault which forms the ceiling is produced in two modes. Sometimes it consists of long flat stones, laid across the pit and resting on the sides; at others, of smaller stones laid over each other in diminishing courses, so as to form three or four rows; the weight of the outer ones sustaining the inner in succession. The floor is always of the bare earth; and so are the sides in some; but, in others, the latter are lined with a rude casing of stones. There is no aperture for smoke or light, except that which forms the entrance; nor have the marks of fire been found in any of them. The entrance is so low and narrow as to admit a man with some difficulty, and only by creeping. The top of the door-way, if it may be so called, is either on a level with the surrounding ground, or somewhat beneath it; and it is sometimes formed of a single long stone, at others, of two inclined at an angle, as in the entrances to the Egyptian pyramids; the sides are also secured by stones. A perpendicular pit before it, when the ground is level, admits to this entrance; but being in some cases made in sloping ground, the access, in these, becomes somewhat easier. A heap of earth covers the vault; and, whether it has originally been so or not, they now always resemble the surrounding uneven ground so strongly, that their existence would not be conjectured, nor can

they be discovered except by means of the entrance. As that is narrow, and often obscured by fallen earth or the growth of plants and bushes, many of them, doubtless, remain unknown; nor will the eye of a stranger easily detect them, even when near the very spot. Hence they are occasionally used in some parts of the country for concealing the produce or materials of illicit distillation. The terms Uaigh and Uaimh by which they are known, signify grave and cave; and they are sometimes also called earth-houses. In Ireland, they have improperly been called Raths; a term belonging to the Stone forts. They are very widely dispersed; and, in this respect, they correspond with other obscure and ancient structures in Scotland, which seem to have belonged to a people originally derived from one source, though occupying different parts of the country at different periods. I have seen them in the island of Eda in Orkney, near Kildrummie and Ballater in Aberdeenshire, in Sutherland, in Isla, and here in North Uist; but I know not that any printed account or enumeration of them has been given.

The smallness of their capacity, and the impossibility of standing upright or of using fire in them, render it improbable that they were the ordinary dwelling-places of the people. Yet this point is obscure or doubtful. Gildas describes the Irish as issuing from below ground; and it appears that when they died, their bodies were suffered to occupy as a grave what they had inhabited as a house. So says Alexander ab Alexandro; and hence, also, it is said, the double meaning of Uaimh, and of Kil or Celle. It is also said that the Scythians and ancient Germans, and the Firbolg, lived under ground in the winter. Yet it is probable that their habitations were more spacious and commodious dwell-

ings, resembling those of the Greenlanders and of the inhabitants about Caucasus; an example of which is now to be seen in North Rona. On the whole, there are stronger reasons for supposing that the Uaighs were temporary hiding places, or intended for the concealment or preservation of property. We are informed that the ancient Helveti and Germans dug holes or constructed cavities under ground to conceal their grain; covering them in such a manner when they left their houses, that they could not be discovered. According to Tacitus, they served both purposes; unless he has described another kind of structure, or two under one designation. "Solent enim et subterraneos specus aperire, eosque multo insuper fimo onerant: suffugium hiemi ac receptaculum frugibus; quia rigorem frigorum ejusmodi locis molliunt." Also, on an invasion, "abdita et defossa aut ignorantur, aut eo ipso fallunt quod quærenda sunt." In Scandinavia, they seem often to have been, like natural caves, the depositories of treasures. Hence, for the purpose of protecting these, it was inculcated on the people that all such caves were inhabited by demons or dragons: and thus appears to have arisen the widely prevalent belief of dragons guarding treasures; a fiction which equally pervades Oriental romance.

Respecting the exact age of the people by whom they were here built or used, the enquiry is attended with the same difficulties that beset almost every thing else which relates to the ancient population of Scotland. It is probable however that the term Pictish is justly applied to them. They are the works of a rude or early people; and therefore not unlikely to belong to the earliest Gothic settlers, the Picts. This at least may be considered as true where they occur on the east side of Scotland; or in that which really was under the dominion of the proper

Picts. That they also occur in the Northern Islands, or generally in the districts occupied by the Scandinavian nation, does not contravene this opinion; as the same Gothic source is the origin of both these classes of invaders. In this case, however, the name Pictish can then no longer be applied to them with propriety. The Irish specimens may fairly be traced to the same Scandinavian source, or to the Firbolgs, as these people are well known to have occupied the sea coasts of Ireland from a very early period. That such buildings were known to the nations who were the common parents of the Pictish and Scandinavian colonies, confirms this opinion. Thus the Uaighs, like the Conical towers, seem to have belonged to a people once widely diffused over the north of Scotland, and who, if architectural remains are as capable of proving a negative as of establishing a connexion or filiation among nations, were, in this also, distinguished from their Celtic neighbours.

But as an antiquarian discussion would be out of character without an hypothesis, here is one on which you may exercise your wit or your bile, as either may chance to prevail; being at full liberty to treat it with as little ceremony as Pinkerton or as Carter might have done, if age had not blunted the teeth of one old Lion, and sent the other to contemplate the works of the Great Architect of all things.

Whether the art of constructing an arch was known or not before the time of Alexander the Great, does not at present concern me; the question here, is about the how, not the when. I take it for granted that the origin of European Gothic architecture, or of the sharp arch, was in the East. Here I am backed by Sir Christopher Wren, who did not care much about Gothic architecture, and by Lord Aberdeen, who cares a great deal, as well

as by Whittington, Haggit, Kerrick, Hawkins, and, as I trust, by many more. I need not repeat arguments as much too familiar as they would be too long for a place here.

It is also demonstrable that, long before the period of its introduction into Europe, probably from the times of the most distant architectural record, the pointed arch was in use in the East. It is found, of great antiquity, as well as widely diffused, throughout India. Nor is it limited to that ancient country, as it occurs in the neighbouring territories of China and Tartary, in Persia, and, generally speaking, in all those lands commonly called Oriental and requiring no other definition. The very superior antiquity of many of the Indian specimens to any of those found in Europe, admits of no question; and if there could be a doubt respecting dates, it is determined by those of the Arabic examples which occur at Mecca and Damascus, and by the Nilometer of Rhouda, the date of which is 833. If all this be true, the sharp arch is therefore more ancient than the round one; which, whether it be really so recent as some antiquaries have attempted to prove, or not, is assuredly of no very high antiquity.

If this basis has been made good, as seems indisputable, it remains next to enquire about the mechanical origin of the sharp arch, as a preliminary to that of the circular one. The circumstance which now constitutes a marked character of the Gothic arch, be its curvature what it may, is, I may admit, the absence of a key stone. There is a perpendicular joint at the summit, or the archivolts on each side rest against each other, without an intermediate wedge. But this is not essential or exclusive, as that arch may exist without it; the perpendicular joint being unnecessary for its construction or strength, whatever it may be for symmetry. If now it is

easy to imagine two straight inclined stones meeting, with squared terminations, it is equally so to suppose that they had been fitted by a perpendicular joint. In either case the structure is sufficient for its purposes. In either case also it is easy to conceive that taste had given a curvature to the stones; and thus the graceful form of the arch becomes combined with its utility. Such is, even at present, an arch of this character where its dimensions are not too considerable; it is little changed from its original germ, and that germ is found in the two inclined stones which form the doorway of our Pictish or subterranean vaults. But if that mode of forming an arch, or the substitute for one, is the most simple and obvious, it appears also to possess an actual historical claim to the highest antiquity. It forms the entrance to the Pyramid of Cheops, it occurs in the walls of the Greek Thebes, in the ancient Cyclopean remains of Italy, and in some subterraneous vaultings in that country, of unknown, and probably of Etruscan antiquity. That it is found, as I lately showed, in the chapels of Barra, serves no purpose but to indicate how poverty or want of dexterity has retrograded to the same primitive form.

Thus the inclined stones form a species of Gothic arch, though a rude one; and in the cases quoted, the angle is acute. This arch is also necessarily of small dimensions, because it must thus have been determined by the length of a single stone. Increasing in size, it required two stones on each side, remaining equally efficacious, if, as is here presumed, a sense of beauty had led the artists to give the whole a curvature. In the rudest case, where all the joints, even that at the summit, were naturally made perpendicular to the tangent of the curvature at the point where they occurred, the perfect meeting of the archivolts, or the perpendicular joint, was still want-

ing. It is not a very difficult step from this to the multiplication of the stones; and it is plain that if these were erected, the arch would remain firm, although incomplete in design, from the triangular space remaining at the meeting of the last stones, or archivolts, which would thus only touch each other by a line, as in the fundamental or simple construction. Thus indeed might the first curved and sharp arch have been formed more naturally than by uniting the stones by means of a perpendicular joint; which may be considered as a refinement originating in taste, or, more probably, in a notion of its giving a firmer support. In that case symmetry required that the vacant space should be filled with a stone to complete the general outline, and thus the first germ of the key-stone is traced.

It is neither a wide nor a difficult step, from this to a closing stone which should possess breadth below as well as above; and when this is adopted, one of the most discriminating characters of the Gothic arch vanishes, and the structure depends for its strength on the key-stone. Such arches can in fact be found in our old buildings; as there are also others where the apex is a single stone, similarly notched, or not, but imposed on the lateral ones. From the former to the arch of wedges, the progress is obvious and direct. Convenience or taste substitute an uniform curve in the place of two: every stone, however small, now becomes a wedge, and the key-stone finishes the arch and the hypothesis together.

Thus the sharp arch is the parent of the circular, as that was itself generated by the inclined stones; the mechanical progress, if justly stated, confirming the historical one, as there can be no question respecting the priority of the sharp arch. That the intersection of circular arches never will, nor ever did, form the Gothic arch,

is now admitted, if I mistake not, on all hands. It is that hypothesis which has so long encumbered the history of Gothic architecture. It is plain that the sharp arch is more ancient, as far as the world is concerned, than the round; although Roman or round arches are more ancient in England, as well as in Europe at large, than Gothic ones. Had not our early antiquaries in Gothic architecture imagined that this style originated in England, we should not have been so long troubled with disputes and books on this subject; which I must, however, quit, leaving my hypothesis of the circular arch to the chance of having its brains knocked out by a key-stone, when some indignant architect shall succeed in proving that it arose in the head of a mathematician, because mathematicians are so extremely pacific to this hour about its true theory.

The western side of North Uist, as of other parts of the Long Island, is subject to the sand inundation; but though this is common on sea shores, there are not many places where the consequences are beneficial. The tenants, it is true, are not always of this opinion, as they are occasionally sufferers: but the proprietors have also hitherto bewildered themselves on this subject, as they have equally overlooked the benefits which they derive on the one hand, while they contemplate the loss they endure on the other. In all these islands, the sand is chiefly or entirely calcareous, formed of the fragments of shells. These being washed up by the sea, are ground to powder by the waves; and this, becoming dry at low water, is carried onwards to the land by the violence of the winds. Thus there is formed a high and irregular bank of dry sand, immediately on the shore; generally broken into hillocks and excavations, and, wherever it appears solid, compacted by the roots of the well-known grasses and plants which nature seems to have destined

to this office. Much of the sand that is blown up, escapes over this first barrier into the interior country; but the barrier itself moves on also in time, to be succeeded by a new bank and fresh hillocks, sometimes in new places, at others in the same, as accidental circumstances, such as the lee of a rock, the presence of moisture, or the vigour of vegetation, favour its accumulation. To produce the destruction of a bank or the removal of a hillock, it is sufficient that a hole be made, however small, or a portion of the vegetable covering removed; circumstances which proprietors in general are careful to prevent. In this country, it is extremely difficult to check the tenants in this matter; as the Galium verum, one of the most useful and abundant of these protecting vegetables, is much used by them in dyeing. The wind, having once found a breach, soon scoops out and disperses the sand: leaving broken banks, which, lastly, are reduced to pillars, standing as memorials of the former height of the whole, but destined, in no long time, to follow the same course. Thus, as these outer barriers are dispersed and reduced to the level of the sea shore, the sea seems to gain on the land. But, in other places, new banks are forming from the same causes, and here the land is gaining on the sea. With regard to the tenants, the loss of one is generally the gain of another. To the proprietor, the whole might be considered as pretty fairly balanced; but it is more likely that, on the whole, the land is rather increased than diminished. Every sand hill came originally from the bottom of the sea; and every addition, vacillate as it may in place, must come from the same fertile source. That this is often the fact, is very certain; since on many sea shores large tracts of land are actually produced in this manner.

Though there should not be much gain, however, in

the extent of the land, there seems to be a steady acquisition in regard to its value. On a superficial view, it would appear, as it must do to the tenants who may chance to suffer, that the whole process is injurious; as, unquestionably, many spots, once fertile, are rendered barren, at least for a time. But while those who lose complain, the gainers, as usual, do not boast. The sand, in its progress, serves to fertilize a more distant spot, while it may suffocate that one on which it rests too abundantly. Thus the loss of one farm, in point of fertility as in extent, becomes the gain of another; and the advantages and disadvantages are perpetually transferred from the hand of one tenant to that of his neighbour. But the proprietor is always gaining; as the extent of the improved land is far greater than that of the injured. Not only here, but in South Uist, in Barra, in Coll, in Harris, in Colonsa, and in many other places, the winds sweep the sand far into the interior, till it is checked by the hills; where meeting with moisture by which it is fixed, and peat to which it is a perpetual and ever-renovated manure, it brings on a coat of verdure where nothing grew before but heath; whence that, which, on the flat and arid shores, is the cause of small spots of barrenness, is, in its progress, the source of extensive fertility. The springing of white clover is one among the results which prove this good effect: as that is an invariable result of the application of calcareous matter to Highland pastures. The proprietors have not hitherto been aware of the nature of this process, of so much importance in the agriculture of these Islands. They have forgotten to note the difference between their own lands and those which sand injures: judging by habit, and forgetting to observe or reason. It is proper for them to recollect that the transference, of even common sand, may thus be

sometimes useful, far more that which is of a calcareous nature. They may cease to be so anxious in checking the sand inundation; whenever at least the position of the ground is such as to enable the prevailing winds to dispose of it in the manner in which it seems most evidently to be distributed in North Uist.

At the entrance of Loch Maddy there are two basaltic rocks rising abruptly out of the sea, which seem as if they had wandered across from Sky, the whole of North Uist being formed of gneiss. They give the name to this inlet, Maddy signifying a dog. It signifies a horse-muscle, says Martin; and thus are etymologists ever at variance. The Gaelic etymologists seem to have been singularly infelicitous in their attempts to trace the names of their own islands; having puzzled themselves as much about the most obvious words, as those learned persons, St. Jerom, Tertullian, Beausobre, Godfrey Wendelin, Pere Hardouin, and Mons. Basnage have done with Abraxas and Abracadabra. Confiding in your love of this divine science, I set about vigorously to collect them all, and ran aground on the very first island. Sky, says Martin, is Skianach, and Skianach is winged. So say others who ought to have known better. Skian is a dagger, says another philosopher; ach is added "euphoniæ gratia," and then this unnecessary syllable as well as the preceding one being lopt off again, we have Sky. This is as bad as Loch Cateran: broad, plain, tangible, common Gaelic; spelt, pronounced, and understood in the exact and necessary sense, and yet overlooked for a century by the Gael themselves, residing on the very spot, and writing books about it. How is this. Is it the necessary destiny of etymologists always to take the wrong road when the right one is before them. So it has been said. So says Swift. But they may con-

sole themselves in the failure of Plato and Varro before them. Martin has given but two or three more, and they are, if possible, worse. One of them is absurd enough. Dih and Rah, two giants, who came from the moon or elsewhere, fought and murdered each other on a certain island which thus became Dihrah or Jura. But as etymologists are never at peace, De Bochat says, that "Jura in the Hebrides" is Jou rag, the reign of God; and he applies the same philosophy to the Jura of Switzerland. Dean Monro has given but one, and that is wrong. Pennant is once right and once wrong; and the tour books, of course, have nothing but what they have borrowed one after another from his work.

The fate of the Αἰβουδαι themselves has been singularly hard. But if the Æbudæ or Hebudes have had the misfortune to be converted into Hebrides from having been transcribed by a bad penman, we must now, I suppose, bear it as well as we can; though the blunder shall not be perpetuated by me. It is to perpetrate the same crime. But that is no reason why a recent antiquary, with the stores of the Advocate's library before him, should derive Hebrides from Ey Brides, the Isles of St. Bridget or St. Bride, or of King Brudæus as others say. Had he forgotten that Richard, and Timothy Pont, and Blaeu, were in his reach, he might have converted the Greek characters of Ptolemy into Latin. Yet even Dr. Macpherson, who was the first I believe to suggest that corruption, chooses to adhere to this fictitious etymology. They were not known by the name of Hebrides till recently, nor had St. Bride any sway in them in former days. There does not appear to have been even a chapel dedicated to her. By the Norwegians, they were called Sudereys, Sudereyar; and here also this author has mistaken the meaning of the term, and misled Pennant;

misleading, of course, every one else. It is important to correct this error, because it corrupts History: the rest are rather matter of curiosity and amusement. The Doctor says that the Sudereys were the Western Isles to the south of Airdnamurchan Point, calling the rest Nordereys; and Pennant chooses, capriciously enough, to draw the line at Cairnburg. Now it is perfectly plain that the Norwegian writers called all the Western Islands Sudereys, thus distinguishing them from Shetland and Orkney, which were the Nordereys, and formed a separate feudal dominion. This is distinctly stated everywhere, and has been indicated in the preceding sketch of their history. From a still more absurd misapprehension of this term, arose the imaginary Sodor, which the same etymologists thought fit to derive from Σωτὴρ. It might have been as well if they had enquired whether there was any such town before assigning its etymology. Camden places it in the Isle of Mann, where it never was heard of; and Pont, determined to make sure of it, fixes it in Iona, with three beautiful little turrets to indicate its situation, at a point where not even a house ever existed. Blaeu follows him; and in much more that is equally fictitious. Nay, even its own Bishops have been for centuries hunting it through their diocese in vain; while they continue to retain a title as valid as that of King George to France when the English kingdom of France had become a French Jacobin republic. The Bishops of Mann ceased properly to be Bishops of Sodor, or of the Sudereys, under Edward the first, when the Abbots of Iona assumed the name of Bishops of the Isles, which became afterwards annexed to the See of Argyll by James the sixth. At present, they might as justly be termed Bishops of Mecca. But to return to the individual islands.

Being thus discomfited in my enquiries into learned books, I submitted a list of these islands to different Gaelic scholars of high reputation. Out of the whole I procured six that were correct, as I ought to have foreseen from the fate of Sky and the Ebudæ; the remainder were a collection of quidlibet a quolibets worthy of being ranked with Eurydice and Astyanax. The struggles and ambages that were used to extract the square root of a Danish word in Gaelic, were particularly amusing. On carefully examining the names of the islands by other rules, it became evident that a large proportion of them was of Scandinavian origin. But these are not all contained in any one of the present dialects; being, on the contrary, divided among the Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and old Icelandic. Two or three are compounded of Scandinavian and Gaelic; and a few, if not purely from the latter tongue, are only altered by the addition of the Scandinavian terminal ey, ay, or a, all of them abbreviations of eylan, signifying island, or water-land: ey being a Gothic word for water, whence the French term. A very few have hitherto defied my researches, as well as those of the Gaelic scholars; but the reasons are not inexplicable.

It is, unquestionable, that many of our local names, in Britain generally, as well as here, have been imposed before the Celtic tongue had been divided into its present various dialects. Thus names of places are still in use in Scotland, which must be sought in the British or Welsh, and not in the Gaelic; and thus it is possible that some more of the unexplained names may be referred to their real sources, as I have here referred Arran and Cumbray; though I have hitherto failed in my own attempts. It is also evident, on comparing some of the names by which the islands were anciently

known, with the present, that they have been either changed from misapprehension, or corrupted in the pronunciation, till they have become unintelligible; an event much facilitated by the outrageous discrepancy which exists between the Gaelic orthography and the pronunciation.

To be convinced of this, it is sufficient to examine the names as given by Monro, Martin, Pont, Blaeu, and others, and to compare them with the present orthography, which is far more steady, and is also more correct, as is proved by the much greater facility with which they are referred to their roots. Yet some have plainly remained in a hopelessly corrupted state, such as Harris, Harmetray, Gometra, and others. How careless the older writers have been about these names, and how they have been altered in the transmission, will be very evident in looking into Monro's book, in which it is scarcely possible to recognize one in ten of them. I have remarked elsewhere on the inaccuracy of this Dean, whom Buchanan so much lauds, and from whom he has copied his account of the Western Islands, just as he has, without the slightest compunctious visitings, given us the lives and actions of his fictitious kings. It would puzzle any mortal to follow this writer; who might almost as well have remained dormant in his own dormitory, for any information that he has given us; no less than from the names of his islands, which we can seldom now apply, by any ingenuity of contorsion. How indeed, should they be applied, when, very often, the islands do not exist. For example; he tells us that on the south side of Isla there are the following islands, Chourna, Maalmori, Osrim, Bridi, Corshera, Ishol, Immersi, Bethick, Texa, Gearach, Naosg, Rinard, Cana, Tarskeir, Achnar, More, an island resembling a man, unnamed, Jean, and Stackahadda. Thus

there are nineteen islands in the Dean's geography, and on the south side of Isla there are just two. If we allow him the east also as south, there are only nine, and three of these are rocks; and, as to the names themselves, Texa and Churn are the only ones that remain.

Thus it probably is that I have failed in those which I have not explained: yet with so much of the work done, those who follow may perhaps complete the catalogue. It is not merely the solving of etymological riddles. Had it been no more, I might have suffered it all to sleep, as it has long done. But the derivations of the insular names are instructive in another manner; as indicating the country and origin of the insular population. It is rarely that local names are changed by a new people, by conquerors. If they adopt the language of the conquered, still more do they continue the names of places, however they may modify them to the character of their own language. That even the Romans followed this practice, is too well known to require examples. Hence it is that, when we find the far larger proportion of the insular names to be of Scandinavian origin, we are entitled to conclude, not merely that they were inhabited by a Scandinavian people, but that they were not previously occupied by a Celtic one. We cannot indeed aver that positively, from this circumstance alone: but it is highly probable that if the islands had been originally peopled by Celts, they would have displayed more Celtic names. If not absolutely uninhabited by that original race, we may at least safely conclude that they were very scantily occupied before the Normannish invasions.

I am aware however that some uncertainty must always remain, from the known similarity of the Gaelic and Gothic tongues. Thus, in the Icelandic, there are such common words as these, which are also Gaelic or British: Ern, an eagle; Lind, a cascade; Laag, a valley;

Tarffus, a bull; Fiall, a mountain; Fell, an acclivity; Baal, a fire; and so on. Such modifications of the general rule as may be required from this cause, may be admitted without subverting the general argument, into which I cannot here enter more minutely. But to terminate this very slender sketch of what would demand a treatise, I may remark that one of our most recent antiquaries, whom I need not quote again, has been misled on this subject when he asserts that the Scandinavian names prevail in the outer islands and the Gaelic in the inner; proving that the former were invaded and inhabited by the northern pirates before the latter. There is no reason to suppose this from the history which I formerly gave; while there are no other historical facts to prove it. Nor is the statement correct. As to the names of islands, there are four Gaelic names to five Scandinavian ones in the Isles of Barra, when it is particularly asserted of the Long Island that the Scandinavian is predominant or exclusive. In the inner islands, eighteen out of twenty-three of the chief are Scandinavian; and as to local names within them, Isla is full of bol and bus, well-known northern appellations; the first signifying a house, and the last a wood or thicket, (buster,) and applied, like Caer, to residences. This learned person, however, appears to have been misguided by Pont and Blaeu; as others before him, who, like Buchanan and Dr. Campbell, had no personal knowledge, have been misled by the imaginary weight of names, and thus given their aid in perpetuating error.

But, to quit these general remarks, I shall now give you the best catalogue that I can. Though I have occasionally given the etymology where the island happened to come in my way, it will be advantageous to see the whole in one collective view; as that will convey a notion, both of the principles of nomenclature

adopted, and of the proportion which were relatively named by the Northmen and by the natives. While I have distinguished the conjectural or doubtful from the certain, and further classed them according to certain analogies, I must also remark that where the number of names appears less than the number of the islands, it is partly because a few of the most insignificant, particularly where they appeared hopelessly corrupted, have been passed over, but chiefly on account of the frequent occurrence of the same name for many different islands. Thus there are no less than four called Rona, as many called Flota, Berneray, Glas, Fladday or Flattay; while there are duplicates or triplicates of Soa, Wia, Ghia, Boreray, Linga, Longa, and others. Hence you will perceive that very few of the whole number of names remain unexplained. I have seldom thought it necessary to distinguish the Scandinavian terms according to the different dialects, or languages of the Mœsogothic radical.

The following catalogue is derived from Saints, to whom there were churches or chapels dedicated in some of the islands, and who seem to have been mostly of Irish extraction, as were all the followers of St. Columba. They may thus be considered chiefly of Gaelic origin, being only modified or corrupted by the Scandinavian terminal ey, which has passed successively into ay and a.

Flannan	from St. Flann	Kerrera, Kiarara,	from St. Kiaran
Barra	—— St. Barr	Mul Donich	—— St. Duncan
Colonsa	—— St. Columba	Oransa	—— St. Oran

Besides Marnoch, Martin, Chenzie and Inch Kenneth, St. Cormac's Isles, and St. Kilda. In the Scandinavian, we find a Divinity, which may rank with these; Taransa, from Taran or Thor; and in the Gaelic there are Gigha and Gia, a corruption of Dia ey, God's island; as is proved by the Norwegian name, which is written Gud ey in the account of Haco's expedition.

Animals are a frequent source of these names, and among them there are both Scandinavian and Gaelic etymologies. In the first, are the following:

Soa,		the isle of swine	Orsa, Oersa, Eorsa;	from Ioor, isle of horses	
Raasay;	from Raa,	—— of roes	Ulva;	—— Ulffur,	—— wolves
Tirey;	—— Tiur,	—— of bulls	Haversey;	—— Hafur,	—— he goats
Jura;	—— Diur,	—— of deer	Levenish, from Lava nish,		—— birds
Canna;	—— Kanin,	—— of rabbits			

Calva, Calve, or Calf, a common Norwegian name, found in Mull and Mann, is not named exactly from the animal; but from being related to the main island as the Calf is to the Cow, or as St. Margaret's is to Westminster Abbey. Cara, Kyr ey, the island of Cows, and Handa, Hind ey, that of Hinds, appear rather possible than certain. In the Gaelic, there are, from the same source:

Rona;	ron,	the isle of seals	Inish Capel;		the isle of mares
Ensay;	eoin	—— of birds	Eilan an each		—— of horses
Mullagroch,	Mul grach or graidh,	a stud of horses	Tanera;	tan,	—— of the herd
			Muck;	muc,	—— of swine

Whether Eilan na Monach, na Clearach, and Inch Cailleach, the Isles of Monks, Clergy, and Nuns, are to be adopted in this division, under Muc, or in that of the Saints, I do not pretend to determine. Trodda, from the Scandinavian Trolds, may be put in the same ambiguous company.

Names derived from qualities, or resemblances, or comparisons, are the most common of all, and they occur in both languages. In the Scandinavian there are the following:

Sky;		mist	Fladda;		the flat island
Rum;		spacious	Pladda;		a plate
Back;		an eminence	Schillay;	skil,	a division: divided
Egg;		an edge	Fiaray;	fiar,	a shore
Staffa;	staf,	the isle of pillars	Sursay;	sur,	sour
Seil & Suil;		a sail	Blada;	blad,	a leaf: leafy: grassy
Luing & Linga;		long	Narsey;	nar,	a carcase: a burying place
Torsa;	torst	the dry island			
Scarba, Scarpa;	scarp,	a precipice	Groay;	groa;	to grow: fertile
			Tahay;	taa,	a toe: a headland
Uist;		west	Opsay;	op,	a hole: a cavern
Sanda, Sandera;		sand islands	Maltey;	mallt,	meal: fertile
Vatersa;		water island	Isa;	is,	ice island
Hellesa;	helle,	the island of rocks	Raney;	ran,	rapine: thieves' island
Flota;		the island of fleets			

The last eleven seem rather probable, but are not so

clear as the former: they are all from the Icelandic. Eriska seems a corruption of Erics ey. Ailsa is similarly an apparent corruption of Hellesa; peculiarly appropriate. Isla is The island, κατ' ἐξοχήν; as a principal seat of government.

In the same class the Gaelic has the following:

Arran;	the land of mountains. British	Neave;	heaven. A monastery probably
Scalpa;	a cave	Drum;	Scandinavian and Gaelic: a hill
Pabba;	stubble	Gillisay;	servants' island: servants of God
Coll;	a wood	Dana;	the isle of Danes
Mull;	a hill	Croulin;	the red
Eysdill;	dale island	Iona;	the isle of waves
Garveloch,	the rough rock	Shiant;	sacred
Lismore;	the great garden	Ulleram; ulla,	a burying place
Glas;	green or grey	Tesca; tec,	a bone: a similar allusion
Bernera;	the serrated island	Borrera; bor,	a knob
Mingala;	the beautiful	Bulg;	a bulge
Longa & Lunga;	the isle of ships	Shuna;	lovage
Craig Daive;	oxes' isle	Bute; Buta,	a ridge
Freuchlan;	the isle of heath		
Ree;	the king's isle		
Chourn;	hell		

Among these, some of the latter are questionable. Shaw is said not to be good authority. It is unnecessary to give the other Gaelic radicals.

Lewis, Liodhus, the Residence of Liod (Macleod), is Norwegian; but does not well fall into any of the preceding divisions. Nor does Cumbray, from Kumr ey, the islands of the Cumbrians, who once occupied this district.

In the names compounded of Scandinavian and Gaelic, we find Altvig, a mountain bay, Garveilan, rock island, and Kiarnaborg or Cairnburg, sufficiently obvious. The compounds from Sker, scar, a rock, are occasionally of this nature; and are Skerry, simply, with Sulisker, Dusker, Hysker, Baisker, Carnisker, Hartasker, Kelisker, and Skernamull; which require no further explanation. Whether the isles of Macfadyen, Macphaill, and Macalken, belonged to Saints or Chiefs, no one seems to know.

Of the few that remain, I can make little or nothing. Harris is corrupt beyond hope; though the Gael say it is

from Earrann, a portion. It is more probably from Aras a habitation, or settlement. Wia, Valay, and Huna, should be Scandinavian, because they occur in Shetland; but I know not their meaning. Vi, with the plural Uiou, Ubh in Gaelic, is an egg; a derivation applicable enough. Lamlash seems just such an inversion of Molass, the old name, as gallon is of Lagena. Of Gometra, Fudia, Vacasey, and the Bicla part of Benbicla, or Benbecula, I can make nothing. Harmetra may be derived from Armunn, a Chief. But, as you see, there is not much left for my successors.

The total result is, that there are about forty-six names of Scandinavian derivation, comprising the principal islands, and about forty of a Gaelic or British origin, of which nine only are of any note, and among which, Arran, Bute, Mull, Coll, and Lismore, are the only ones that can be considered principal. If we include those named after Saints, who were rather Irish than Gaelic, it would add twelve to that list, of which three only are conspicuous; namely, Barra, Colonsa, and St. Kilda. The Skers, being little more than rocks, are hardly worthy of notice, and are, besides, pretty equally divided.

If now the repetitions of the same names are taken into the account, and the great disproportion which the Scandinavian bear to the Gaelic as far as the principal islands are concerned, it will appear probable that the aboriginal population was very scanty before the Norwegian invasions and settlements. But I am tired of acting the part of Mithridates. Yet if you are ambitious to fill the blank I have left, you can easily do it on the acknowledged principle of etymologists; that the vowels may be always safely substituted for each other, and that the consonants may be interchanged without inconvenience.

KELP. HARRIS. ROWDILL. POLICE.

It is not easy to imagine a greater air of desolation than is presented by the coasts of these islands. A sea without ships, a land without houses, a bleak, rude, and treeless shore, never-ending rocks intermixed with black bogs, they seem as if destined to desertion and solitude, abandoned to the winds and the waves. But the kelp season had now commenced, and the whole was one continued line of fires; the grey smoke streaming away from each on the surface of the water, till, mixing with the breeze, it diffused its odoriferous haze over all the surrounding atmosphere. Industry and activity were at length roused, and the endless line of grey and barren rocks appeared now to be swarming with a busy population. Little imagination was required to fancy the "Norman sails afar" and the fatal Raven of the North streaming to the gale, while the kindling of the beacon fires was summoning the clans, and the "hawks of heaven" were watching for their destined prey.

As we ran by, an island was pointed out as being then worth to the lessee £2,000 a year, having been let on a long lease to his ancestors for £40. I give you the story as I heard it, but it is not unlikely to be true. Nobody has attempted to balance the comparative value of the kelp and of the agricultural produce for the whole islands, and I am unable to do it for you, for want of documents; but, on some very important estates, they are equal; taking the price of that commodity at an

average of the last forty years. Thus the value of the islands has undergone a most material augmentation since 1730, the period at which this manufacture was first introduced from Ireland. Though I cannot give the agricultural value of the Western Islands, the quantity of kelp has been estimated as vacillating between 5000 and 6000 tons: and of this, about two thirds are the produce of the Long Island; the result of those highly indented shores which I have attempted to describe. Taking the price as it now stands, (1821), at £10. per ton, the joint returns to the proprietors should vary from 50 to £60,000; but as it is supposed that the various expenses amount to £5 per ton, this sum must be reduced to one half for the net revenue. Again, the price paid to the people for manufacturing, being £3 per ton, in equivalents at least, if not in specie, a sum, varying from 15 to £18,000 annually, is divided as the wages of labour among a population whose chief misfortune it is, that it wants work to perform. Whatever the price of the article also may be, this sum is invariable; and I shall therefore leave you to consider the importance of this manufacture to all parties. It is indeed the only one which they possess.

As the price of kelp varies in the market, the revenues of the proprietors are subject to fluctuations from which the labourers are exempt. When first wrought, and down to the year 1760, the price reached from £2 to £5 per ton; the expenses being then far less than at present. In 1790, it was at £6; whence, as the succeeding war checked the importation and raised the price of Barilla, it rose to 11, 12, 15 and, for one short period, to £20. Valuable therefore as this species of property may be, it is extremely unsteady; while it is also precarious, since any great increase in the produce of foreign barilla, the removal of the duties, or the dis-

covery of the long-attempted problem to decompose sea salt by a cheap process, might extinguish it in a moment. Where the interests are so few and the total advantages so limited, it could scarcely expect protection from restrictive laws. I must now indeed add, that between the period of writing and printing this, the duties on barilla have been diminished, but that an after-suspension of the law has also taken place. Hence it becomes unnecessary further to alter what I had written; while the present view will tend to show what the effects of the loss of this manufacture are likely to be on the insular population, and how necessary it is that some equivalent, if temporary, relief should be given.

If this manufacture was once ill understood and worse managed, it seems now to have attained all the perfection of which it is susceptible. June, July, August, and part of September, form the period of this harvest. The drift weed thrown on shore by storms is sometimes used; but, if much injured, it is rejected; as in this state it is found to yield little salt. This kind consists chiefly of tangles, as they are here called, or Fucus Saccharinus and Digitatus, which, at all times, contain less Soda than the harder species, and are also much better adapted for manure. The latter consists chiefly of four, the Serratus, Digitatus, Nodosus, and Vesiculosus; and these are cut at low-water from the rocks on which they grow. As the value of a kelp estate depends on the magnitude of the crop, it is therefore regulated principally by three circumstances; namely, the linear extent of the shores, the breadth of the interval between high and low water mark, consisting in the length of the ebb or fall of the tide and the flatness of the beach, and the tranquillity of the water or its shelter from the surge: to which may be added, the nature of the rocks, as some kinds are found to favour

the growth of the plants more than others. It has been attempted to increase the extent of this submarine soil by rolling stones into the water; but I believe that the success has never repaid the expense. On some estates, this harvest is reaped every second year; on others, only every third; nor does it seem to be agreed what are the comparative advantages of either practice.

The weeds, being cut by the sickle at low water, are brought on shore by a very simple and ingenious process. A rope of heath or birch is laid beyond them, and the ends being carried up beyond the high water mark, the whole floats as the tide rises, and thus, by shortening the rope, is compelled to settle above the wash of the sea, whence it is conveyed to the dry land on horseback. The more quickly it is dried, the better is the produce: and, when dry, it is burnt in coffers, generally constructed with stone, sometimes merely excavated in the earth. In Orkney, the latter are preferred. It has been attempted, idly enough, to introduce kilns; a refinement, of which the advantages bear no proportion to the expense; as in the ordinary mode, the kelp forms its own fuel. As twenty-four tons of weed, at a medium, are required to form a ton of kelp, it is easy to conceive the labour employed for this quantity, in the several processes of cutting, landing, carrying, drying, stacking, and burning.

In general, the kelp-shores are reserved by the proprietor, who thus becomes the manufacturer and merchant. If, in some points of view, this is a questionable piece of policy, it is a practice not easily avoided. The farms of the great bulk of the tenants are too small to allow of their managing the kelp to advantage; nor would it be easy to find a responsible lessee for this part of the estate alone. As there is no class of labourers in

this country, the work must also be performed by the small tenants. These, however, are not paid by money wages; but, being the tenants on the estate itself, a portion of their rent is thus imposed and received in the form of labour. Thus, two pounds a year and the manufacture of a ton of kelp, will represent the average rent of a farm here, valued at five pounds. All this seems abundantly simple; but as there is always a class of ultra-philanthropists, or something worse, going about the world establishing a character for humanity at the expense of their neighbours, and persuading the people that they are ill governed, (a class that never wants hearers, as Hooker remarks,) so this system has been represented as grievous and oppressive. It has been called compulsory; and it has been said that a free labourer would not engage in so disagreeable an occupation. It would be well if these politicians would substitute some other plan to prevent the people from starving. In our country, everywhere, though labour should be as free as air, there are numerous occupations which, though infinitely more laborious, disgusting, or dangerous, are never in want of hands. The manufacture of kelp is far preferable to ballast heaving, or sawing, or chimney-sweeping, or coal-heaving, or grinding, or horse-boiling, or glue-making, or gilding, or working in a coal pit or an iron foundery, or a white lead manufactory, or a fell-monger's yard, or a powder mill. But the Highlanders know nothing of all this and of much worse: they are desired to grumble and they grumble accordingly.

For those who, without motives, have mistaken the subject merely from want of consideration, the whole evil is removed, as happens in so many other cases, by merely substituting one term for another, cottar for tenant. Such magic lies in words. The small tenant on

a kelp estate is a cottar; a semicottar sometimes, if the term may be used, holding one part at least of his farm, for the performance of a specified quantity of labour. Where he pays no money rent at all, he is precisely a cottar, whatever he may be termed, and exactly in that situation which has been often said to be preferable to that of a money tenant. In no case will the surplus produce of these small farms enable the tenant to pay his rent from them; and if he cannot do that from some other source, he must resign. If he is to find the money by labour, he gains nothing by receiving with one hand that which he must immediately pay back with the other. Nor could he easily decline the kelp manufacture until some other source of wages, some other mode or object of labour in this country, is discovered. He must work when he can obtain work, and at that which is open to him; as there is no choice. There can be no oppression on the part of the landlord, because the tenant takes the farm with his eyes open; not with an indefinite servitude on it, but with a fixed equivalent for a certain sum of money, of which he is fully aware. The whole system, as far as it is inconvenient, is the misfortune of the country, but the fault of no one. It is the natural result of excessive population and consequent competition; united to that minute division of farms which renders the existence of a class of independent labourers impossible. If a steady demand for labour should arise, the rate of wages in the kelp manufacture would probably change together with the system itself; but though the labourer in kelp might imagine himself free, he would scarcely have the choice of refusing the work when it was offered to him. I shall only add to these considerations, that, under the present circumstances, so strong is the aversion to steady labour among the Highlanders, and so great their indolence,

that it is doubtful if any other system could extract from them that exertion which is no less necessary for their own interest than for that of the proprietors of these estates.

I hope you are only half tired, because I have only half done with this dry business. It would be quite in vain for you to expect to understand the policy of the maritime Highlands, without being acquainted with that which forms a large portion of its rural economy, and nearly the whole of its manufactures. Besides, I want to prove to you, that, instead of being acerb, I am the very best friend the Highlanders ever had; labouring to reconcile them to each other, and to systems, which, if not the best of all possible, are the best that are attainable. The proprietors have been so long accustomed to hear themselves censured and abused, that they almost begin to imagine they deserve it; and the people, of course, never think they have so warm a friend as he who assures them that they ought to be unhappy.

It is asserted that the proprietors attempt to crowd the population on these estates, for the purpose of lowering the wages of labour, and thus, of keeping both a cheap and a ready supply of it at hand for this manufacture, from which they alone derive all the profits. This exquisite remark comes from the same politicians who, in some other place, accuse the same proprietors of depopulating their estates by sheep-farming, and of thus causing a ruinous emigration. So difficult is it to ride and drive the ass at the same time. If the population consisted of free labourers, or if the property of the maritime farm were distinct from that of the land, this wish might be a very natural one; but it would not be in the power of the kelp proprietor to influence the population, whatever interest he might have in low wages or cheap

labour. Admitting that such a practice did exist among those, who, as the matter stands, are the proprietors both of the sea and the land, they would, even then, be acting on a system to which they are not only compelled by the state of the country, but which is admitted to be the most benevolent that it is in their power to adopt. If the increasing population, always competing for land, is not accommodated by dividing farms as far as they will bear, it must emigrate or starve. These farms can be divided no lower than to admit of maintaining a family, unless some contingent occupation is added. On the sea shores, this is effected by the fishery: it is equally effected by the kelp manufacture, which supplies the means with the wages, of that labour, the want of a demand for which is the great source of the poverty of the Highlands. Thus these very politicians who, with their other contradictory systems of improvements, are perpetually demanding the establishment of woollen manufactures or of cotton manufactures, as an effectual means of bettering this country, are equally clamorous for the abolition of the only one they already possess; one which is as natural and necessary as it is profitable, and which requires neither capital nor change of habits or residence. It is precisely one of those contingent manufactures to which it would be desirable to add; as the only ones adapted to a population which is but half occupied; which is, and will always and inevitably be imperfectly employed in agriculture. I need scarcely add that it is also a harvest, offered by nature and only requiring to be reaped. That policy would be an extraordinary one which should refuse to work a coal mine because a colliery is a dangerous and a dirty occupation.

But if the proprietors were not thus compelled, by the natural course of events, to accumulate a population

on their maritime or other lands, and that they were to lead where at present they only follow, it is plain that they could only effect this object by offering their farms on better terms than their neighbours. Thus this practice would become a mere commercial speculation, in which a landholder would sacrifice a given sum in the shape of rent, for the contingent acquisition of another in that of a profit on kelp. He must needs see that he is paying the price of labour in two forms; and if, from avarice or ignorance, he becomes a loser by his projects, it is not a subject for the interference of others. Like all other speculations, it will in time rectify itself if wrong, and must be left to that freedom under which alone commerce can thrive.

It is probably true, that, in some places, there are tracts of maritime land now occupied by small tenants, under bad management, which, if less divided and in better hands, would return a greater agricultural profit to the landholder than that which he now derives from the manufacture of kelp. But to change the existing system, in the present state and under the present distribution of the population, by violent means, is not easy; nor can it be contemplated with any satisfaction, since it is to extend too far, that condensation of farms which, hitherto beneficial, has already produced the migration to the sea shores, after the simplest change of place had ceased to be further practicable. In such a case as this, the moral and political effects would be truly painful; as this species of population scarcely possesses the means of emigration. But that some more changes of this nature will, in time, take place, is as certain as that they have already been made. That they will be beneficial to the community at large, is equally certain; but it is desirable that they should be gradual; not forced, but

flowing out of the natural progress of improvement, and effected with the least possible suffering to those who must finally be displaced. Under such a change, an independent class of labourers will arise, and the manufacture of kelp will then demand new calculations.

It cannot be admitted, that, in the present state of the farms, the estates would gain more by diverting all the sea-weed to the purpose of manure, as has been argued. There is no want of additional manure on the small farms, as far as they are now cultivated; nor would the mere increase of this article enable these tenants to improve larger tracts of land. The heaping of sea-weed on bare rocks or wet bogs, will not alone make them productive. A different population, with a different distribution of capital and employment, are required before more extensive tracts can be effectually improved; and whenever this change shall take place, there will be no great difficulty in discovering whether it is more profitable to make kelp or to raise potatoes and corn.

Our landing in Harris was attended by an event equally unexpected and painful. An unfortunate female had been brought from Benbecula, accused of infanticide; and it was necessary to detain her there in her long passage to the county jail. Even without the feelings with which the humane Beccaria (and I might add Voltaire), has inspired his readers respecting this most distressing crime, the inroad thus suddenly made on the whole current of our ideas and thoughts, was extreme. Hearing little of delinquency in this remote country, and strongly prejudiced in favour of the moral character of the inhabitants, the immediate presence of even far slighter depravity than this would have been strongly felt; as if it were possible that crimes should not exist in every state of society throughout so numerous a population. Yet

that they are more rare than in those places where the population is accumulated in towns, is no less true in fact, than that the general principle is itself true.

It is meant to be quaintly remarked, when it is said that domestic or personal theft is rare in the Highlands because there is nothing to steal. There is certainly just as much truth as wit in the observation; but I still believe that the propensity is really rare, if not absent. The desire to steal, where it exists, will never want subjects for its exercise; and a well-trained London adept would not be long in finding matter for the exertion of his ingenuity. It is a sufficient answer indeed to the piece of wit above quoted, that clothes and new linen are exposed to bleach for days, or even weeks, in situations where they cannot be watched, and with perfect security. The same remark is true of the stacks of salt fish which remain piled upon the shores in safety, even among a people who, in our sense of the word, would be considered as starving. There is nothing to prevent a bold Highlander from stopping a monied English traveller in the secluded roads or wild passes of this country; but such acts are utterly unknown. The ancient creaghs on the cattle of the Lowlanders, were of another character, and will come under review hereafter. As to the case of Sutherland, which I mentioned before, it is peculiar; and it must be hoped that it is an exception to the general character of the country.

With respect to the islands, this is a fortunate circumstance, even in a legal view; as the administration of criminal justice is far from convenient. In the case of this culprit, a voyage, first from Benbecula to Harris, was to be followed by another to Sky, whence there was a third voyage to Loch Carron, to be succeeded by a long land journey to Inverness. These sea voyages,

and the nature of the country, render such a journey more inconvenient than it would be at present to transport a criminal and the requisite witnesses, from London to Thurso, a distance of eight hundred miles. Except at Portree, moreover, there is no jail throughout the islands; another frequent cause of inconvenience, particularly in the case of detention before trial, for crimes of less magnitude. The presence of Justices of Peace in some districts, renders the investigation of criminal charges comparatively easy in these; but in many of the smaller or remote islands, where the proprietors are generally absent, and where there are neither clergymen nor principal tenants, there are no ready means of making such investigations. The abolition of the local and hereditary jurisdictions was unquestionably as unavoidable as it was necessary; but some better provision for the ends of justice than are now found, might, perhaps, have been adopted to replace them. Fortunately, the Scottish law does not condemn the injured party to the additional injury of sustaining the expenses of a criminal prosecution; so that, in one point of view, the distance of the courts of justice is of much less moment than it would be in England.

There are similar difficulties to contend with in the case of civil breaches of the law, or of the various minor subjects of contention which cannot fail to arise in every society. If however the people are deprived of the luxuries of litigation in which their Norman ancestors delighted, and in which they yet delight wherever they have the means, they are also saved from its pains: and those wits who amuse themselves with the weak points of legal procedure, will perhaps consider that the gain exceeds the loss. Be the wit such as it may, the remark is true enough; notwithstanding the defensive reasonings

of Jeremy Bentham in favour of cheap law; since the examples of the Isle of Mann and of Guernsey show, that, provided the combatants can but get access to the field of battle, it is indifferent how small the subject of contention is, or at what expense it is pursued, when the habit exists and the passions are excited. Here, where that litigation is impossible, as much from poverty on the one hand as from expense on the other, the injury is endured, or the arbitration of some good-natured Justice or Clergyman satisfies, at least the winning party; and, as in all such cases, some one must lose, the community at large stands just on the same ground as it would have done under a more technical, if not a better, dispensation than that of La Fontaine's Juge de Mesle.

The law of the two straws must find an advocate in Jeremy; because the system of perfection increases the already sufficient inequality between the rich and the poor. Hence the superiority of Turkish justice, of that which is speedy. It is like war, where it is often better to decide quickly wrong than slowly right. As the general interest of the whole is the prime and ultimate end of justice, that object is attained when one party gains what the other loses: it is far otherwise where a third interferes to devour the oyster, and both become losers. In all cases, it is admitted that the event is regulated by chance, not by right; and the cheapest lottery is therefore the best. It is an argument against Turkish law, that the weightiest purse carries the victory. It would be prudent to seek a better, since better may be found. This admits of the retort uncourteous: the weightiest purse carries it either way; the form only changed, the matter the same. Hence also the Western Islands are in that happy condition covertly lauded by Plato when he remarks that the swarming of lawyers is the sign of a profligate and

diseased republic; while our worthy Gael have also escaped the evils for which Livy abuses their Gaulish ancestors. As to what Salisburiensis, Geraldus, and Broterus say, it would be superfluous to you, a Lawyer as well as a Poet. But I must say no more about law, lest, "vastissimis glossarum voluminibus me obruent inexpugnabiles Juristæ." Only, as the world has now undergone the three conditions of being governed by Soldiers, by Priests, and by Lawyers, it seems fully time that Physic should also take its turn, and that we should at length pass under the dominion of Doctors and Apothecaries. Which seems about to happen. Why there are no lawyers in the Islands to teach the people how to quarrel and spend their money, is plain enough. They would not indeed find it difficult to quarrel, but they have no money to spend. Else, doubtless, they would soon learn to follow the practices of their litigious Norman brethren of Mann. It has equally been remarked by wondering naturalists that there are no swallows in this country. The cause is plain: we may say of it as was said of Domitian; a fly cannot live in Uist and Harris. It has also been said of Westminster Hall that there are no spiders, because it is built of Irish oak. Causa pro non causa again. There would be no lawyers there, if there were as few clients as there are flies.

If the good and the evil here neutralize each other, there is a point of law of daily occurrence between the King and his insular subjects in this country, where the evil is inflicted, and the little good which the case might admit in alleviation, is withheld. This is a fiscal question; it cannot be called a difficulty, as the remedy would not be hard to find. The Highlanders may be allowed to complain of unredressed grievances; but let them complain of themselves; of the neglect of those repre-

sentatives who exist only that they may watch, as they do not, over the interests of their constituents. There are no collectors appointed to receive the taxes; although there is no deficiency in the distribution of the usual warnings, or in that accuracy in exacting which must be expected in every financial system. Hence the contributors are obliged to pay them to the proper officers in their respective county-towns, placed at such enormous distances as Inverness and Dingwall; and thus they are, not only charged with the tax itself, but with the difficulty and expense of agency and correspondence and transmission, for sums which seldom exceed a few shillings, and which, however small, are important to persons whose annual rents do not often exceed four or five pounds. Errors, always unavoidable, are here necessarily frequent; while the unfortunate contributor is thus subjected to a correspondence which may exceed his tax, and to surcharges from which he cannot appeal. No lenity of administration can remove this grievance; as the irritation of a tax seldom bears any proportion to its actual value, and as a few instances of vexation are sufficient to overwhelm a thousand acts of mildness or forbearance. It is said in defence of this, that the taxes would not pay the expense of collecting. There are politicians who would answer, that they ought not therefore to be collected at all: but it does not appear very difficult to find an expedient, by placing the collection in the hands of the excise officers, who are present everywhere.

Rowdill, though a small village, is the capital and sole town of this mountainous and rugged district, which contains so little arable land as to be very sparingly inhabited elsewhere. In past times, it is said to have been the seat of a monastery for Regular Canons, founded by

Macleod of Harris and dedicated to St. Columba, and to have formed a principal possession of the Church; if indeed it be true that it once contained twelve churches. It is also said further, that there was a church here dedicated to St. Clement, and that it was founded by David the first in 1124. I know not that these difficulties can be reconciled. As to the twelve churches, however, I imagine this must be taken with some correction; as the existence of so many churches for worship is scarcely possible, when the whole present population, surely much more dense than in those days, cannot fill that one which now alone remains. If the assertion be true in any shape, it is probable that most of these were votive chapels similar to those of Barra. The present church is of considerable dimensions, and is an object of curiosity, as being the only catholic structure which remains entire throughout the Western Islands. How it was spared at the Reformation, we are not informed. It is rendered still more curious by some extraordinary sculptures on its front which do not bear description. How they were ever attached to a Christian church, may well be matter of surprise, unless we could imagine this establishment to have been connected with the Templars; as we should rather have expected to have found them in Hindostan. The only thing that could give the least colour to such a supposition, is a tradition that, in Sky, there was once a college of this order near Portree; a tale, nevertheless, to which it is very difficult to give credit.

The intricacy of the Sound of Harris renders it quite impossible to navigate it without a pilot; and even with the aid of Rory Macdonald, it was among the most formidable operations, with a head wind and sea, that I have witnessed. It is a chaos of rocks and islands. I

thought our fat Captain would have fainted with the fright; and had not Rory threatened to throw him overboard, he would have lost the vessel and ended in fattening lobsters. West Loch Tarbet is a very deep indentation, separated from the East Loch of the same name, only by a very narrow neck, and both of them being rendered very intricate by rocks and islands. This neck forms a natural boundary between Harris and Lewis, which however constitute but one island, although that has no name. But it does not mark the political division between the two estates; these being separated by an imaginary line further to the north. Lang, and Clisseval, which I ascended, are about 2600 feet or more in height: and it is not easy to imagine a more savage and melancholy view than that obtained from them. Barren and black as the analogous parts of North Uist, the flatter parts of this view possess none of its singularity, nor any of that brilliancy which is there the result of the minute intermixture of the land and the water. A more joyless desert could not well be imagined; while the mountainous part displays a greater extent of bare rock and black bog than I have seen in any part of Scotland.

On the west coast, Scarpa and Taransa are two conspicuous islands, the former being a single mountain about 1000 feet high. On the east side, Roneval presents a striking example of the force of the winds in these regions. From the north-west, straight and deep trenches are drawn for many hundred yards in length; two, or even three feet deep, and four, five, or more, in breadth; as if made by a gigantic plough. These are determined by some interval among the rocks, guiding the wind on one point; whence, after having first made a lodgment, it proceeds, as if by sap, till it has produced effects that seem almost incredible.

ST. KILDA.

GRATIAN says that two things are necessary towards a good history; first, that the acts be well performed, and next that they be well told. He had probably been reading Adam Smith on the making of a pin; and on this principle of the division of labour must it have been, that Macaulay wrote a voyage to that St. Kilda which he never saw, and that Alexander longed for Homer to celebrate his exploits. There have been two or three double-headed soldiers indeed, such as Cæsar and Xenophon, who have managed to fight and write both. But the principle is palpably a bad one; nor is it possible that any one, amid the confusion and hurry of thinking and doing, can possibly know what he himself thought and did, half so well as the man who, some nine or twenty centuries after, comes to the task with leisure and time for reflection, cool in his head and warm in his closet. We are peculiarly ill judges of our own feelings and opinions, because it is of the very essence of feeling to absorb and pervert reason, and of opinions to run away with it. Hence it is reasonable that Dr. Hawkesworth should have felt Queen Oberea's flame and Sir Joseph's frosts better than themselves did; very reasonable indeed. But as I can find no one to write my account of St. Kilda for me, I must needs make the best of it that I can.

On approaching the landing place, where a crowd of people was ready to receive us, a tall and matron-like female figure advanced before the rest, with an air of mixed dignity and command, hailing us with the

words "Friends or enemies." We had no sooner satisfied the governor, who seemed to be Martin's Amazon Queen again revived, than the whole of the people rushed down into the water, and seizing on the gunwales of the boat, hauled us up dry before we well knew where we were. We could not but admire the courage of the Minister's wife, who suspected us to be Americans, remaining ignorant of the peace that had not long been concluded. They received this news with joy, estimating, like their betters, that war from which they were remote, just as it affected themselves. In an American war, they participated with peculiar feeling, not only on account of their defenceless situation, but because it had raised the price of tobacco; an article through which the readiest access to their heart and services is gained.

If our new friends had thus experienced some of the pains of ignorance, they had also enjoyed its bliss; if indeed an inhabitant of St. Kilda could feel any concern respecting the dynasty that might rule in France, or how the disturbed balance of Europe was to be readjusted. They had imagined themselves at peace with Napoleon, and at peace they were. But while, good easy people, they dreamed in full security, Elba had appeared and vanished in the political lantern, the drama of the hundred days had been performed, and the curtain had descended at Waterloo over the fears and anxieties of all Europe; of all the world except St. Kilda. But this news excited little emotion: it had no influence on the price of tobacco. The rebellion of former days had been a subject of far different interest to their ancestors; since, of the only two powers they then knew in the world, their chief, Macleod, had delared war against King George. But the presence of the Ex-emperor himself could not have excited more commotion than our own did.

The visits of strangers are few and rare; and every avatar of this nature was well remembered.. He that has no other means of clambering up to the temple of fame, may come to St. Kilda: he will assuredly be remembered in its archives; and some future Martin or Macaulay shall record him in calf well bound, as I myself trust to be recorded, for no good, by some one who may discover that Conochan is higher or lower than I found it, or that the tails of the sheep are not two but three inches long.

My progress, as Queen Elizabeth called it, through the island, was attended by all the male population down to the age of six. You have seen a Jack Pudding at a country fair followed by a rabble of boys; but here it was all in kindness, as of people "that loved too well;" for if their curiosity was great, their civility and good humour were still greater. But when I placed the mountain barometer on the top of Conochan, splendid in all its polished brass, the presence of Mary Tofts in the very act could not have excited more astonishment. I left it to my Highland interpreter to explain the nature and object of this incantation; and have little doubt that it will be remembered for generations. This point is not a mountain, as my predecessors have called it, but merely the summit of the uneven ridge which forms the island. I found the height to be 1380 feet, which is therefore the greatest elevation of St. Kilda. Martin is not far from the mark when he calls it 200 fathoms; but Macaulay, who appears to have determined to write a book without materials, calls it the "Teneriffe of Britain," and makes it 5400 feet, "900 fathoms." If he ever did see it, we may know how to estimate the value of his observations on things that admit neither of weight nor measure: "So much for Buckingham."

Martin, though a very different person, is a most provoking fellow. He was a native of Sky, and had therefore ready access to information; he was not illiterate; he was a scientific man, because he was a physician or a surgeon acquainted with natural history; and he was employed by Sir Robert Sibbald to investigate that of all the islands. But his propensities seem to have been directed rather to supernatural history: and having fulfilled his contract, it must be supposed, in discussing gulls, kittiwakes, and weeds, he seems to have thought the opinions of second-sighted impostors and the metaphysics of ghosts and goblins, of more value than the manners and opinions of living men, or the state of a country then utterly unlike in condition to any land under the sun. It was left for Birt to tell us all that we do know of the Highlands at the beginning of the last century; and, such as his information is, it is as valuable as it is solitary. Martin might have done much more; as he had the advantage of longer residence, freer access, and greater intimacy; while a knowledge of the state of the Islands in his day, would have led us back, for another century or perhaps much more, to a condition of things and a history of manners, customs, and opinions, which, in the neighbourhood of Inverness where Birt wrote, had, though only twenty years later, already undergone most material changes. In the islands, in Martin's time, the Chiefs of Clans not only retained all their influence, but much of their mutual jealousies and hostilities. Foreign manners and usages were unknown or despised; and all that, respecting which we are most curious in this strange modification of the feudal system, remained in its original condition. But it was his misfortune, or rather ours, that he seems to have supposed what was familiar to himself uninteresting to his readers; and thus, in lamenting over

what cannot now be repaired, we must regret that want of the knowledge of man and of his institutions, which disqualified him for judging of what was worthy of record. Had all his ghosts been laid in the Red Sea, it would have been little loss; but he is not the only traveller who has trudged over the world and found nothing to describe.

If, on the subject of St. Kilda, he has furnished us with something by which we may form an opinion of the manners and usages of the people at the time of his visit, he has hardly given us any means of judging how far they were then distinguished from their neighbours: at present, they seem to differ in nothing from the people of the adjacent islands. Their communication with these, now more frequent than in former days, if still rare, added to the appointment of a resident minister, has probably had an effect in softening down any differences that might formerly have existed, and in bringing the whole to one level. Had they remained stationary from that day, while the others were advancing, there might now indeed have been found some interesting peculiarities. But we must not imagine Martin's book the present standard, as has been idly and too generally done, for the Highlands at large. They have sailed down the stream of time with their neighbours; the anchor alone remaining to show where the vessel once lay. There is something, however, in the very name of St. Kilda, which excites expectation. Remote and solitary, the spirit of romance appears still to dwell in the clouds and storms that separate this narrow spot from the world; but, like other spirits, it vanishes at the rude touch of investigation. Still, this island will be interesting to him whose amusement it may be to study the varieties of human life and manners; to contemplate the various modes under

which happiness is distributed, and to seek for that spot in which misery is exhibited under new forms. Nor will the curiosity that is excited by a people destined to live in comparative ignorance of the manners, events, improvements, and opinions, of the world at large, depart unsatisfied. But it is time to come back to "nos moutons;" though it will not be amiss to describe the island first and the sheep afterwards.

As far as I could judge by pacing, St. Kilda is about three miles long, and, where widest, nearly two; its shape resembling somewhat that of a leg of mutton; to use an elegant comparison. Martin calls it two miles long; he is more likely to be right than me. On the south-east side, there is a bay about half a mile in breadth and depth; the land descending to it by a steep declivity, and terminating, on one part, in a stony and sandy beach, and, on the other, in those low shelving rocks which form the landing place, near to which the town is situated. This bay is covered by the lofty and picturesque rock Levenish; and its eastern precipitous boundary increases in height in proceeding round the point toward the north-east. Here the precipice may indeed be called formidable; the high hill Conochan being cut down almost abruptly, from near its summit to the very water's edge. It cannot therefore be much less than 1300 feet high; and, unless it is exceeded by that of Foula in Shetland, which I was unable to measure, it is the loftiest cliff in Britain. It is a dizzy altitude to the spectator who looks from above on the inaudible waves dashing below; and, though too well versed in this kind of scenery and adventure to feel any thing for myself on such occasions, I must confess that it exceeded the stability of my nervous system to witness the descent of one of the bird-catchers, who was parading with the hair rope round his

waist, and only waiting the word of command; anxious, as it seemed, to make a display, but quite as well pleased to remain where he was.

All this is fearful and sublime, but it transcends the bounds of the picturesque; as all objects must where the impression is rather made on the mind than the eye. He who is not accustomed to analyze landscape, to combine it with its moral associations, to look at it with the eye of a poet as of a painter, must blame himself, not the art nor his subject, if neither terror is felt nor danger apprehended from his picture; if the contention of the elements is not heard by the eye, and if the awe produced by dimensions before which man feels himself but as an insect, is not excited by a few square feet of canvas. To attempt such subjects, is to mistake the object and powers of art.

There are some rocky points near the foot of this precipice, one of them presenting a magnificent natural arch, which, in any other situation, would be striking, but are here lost in the overpowering vicinity of the cliffs that tower above them. In proceeding, these soon become low; but at the north-western extremity, the island again rises into a hill nearly as high as Conochan, terminating all round towards the sea by formidable precipices, which are continued nearly to the south-eastern point of the bay. Here, a rock, separated by a fissure from the island, displays the remains of an ancient work; whence it has derived the name of Dune. The surface of the land forms an uneven ridge, somewhat rocky to the south, but presenting elsewhere a nearly uniform, smooth, and green surface. Excepting some imperfect peat on the highest point, the whole is covered by a thick turf of the finest and freshest verdure: the consequence, probably, as much of its perfect drainage as of its trap soil. It con-

tains three principal springs, of which Tober-nam-buy rises by a large well, producing at once a considerable stream. My followers spoke of it with great enthusiasm, as abounding in all sorts of good qualities. The love of water, simply, for its own sake, and independently of any traditionary virtues, is universal among the Highlanders, who stop to drink at every stream that trickles down a rock, whether thirsty or not. "Very fine water; no such water in your country," is a common remark; and they seem to drink it out of mere pride, because there "is no such water any where as in the Highlands." They seem to have as much respect for it as good Izaak Walton, who calls it the eldest daughter of Creation. Truly they are entitled to some advantages in return for the waters in which they are for ever enveloped, in the shape of clouds, fogs, mists, rains, rivers, lakes, and bogs.

The small island Soa is a lofty green hill, precipitous nearly on all sides, and separated from the north-western extremity of St. Kilda by a narrow strait, in which lie two picturesque rocks, one of them being perforated by an arched passage. The view from above is singularly striking, and even sublime, from the depth and narrowness of the chasm and the wildness of the enclosing rocks. The light of the day did not seem to reach it, the objects being illuminated by the reflections from the sea, as it foamed through; the mists which rose from the breaking waves, adding to a depth that seemed indefinite, and the light thin clouds, which were flying in from the western ocean, at every instant involving the summits of the cliffs so as to produce the most magnificent effects of light and shadow, added to a mysterious and romantic uncertainty, which seemed to remove it from the world of realities; a vision of some disturbed dream. Soa is said to contain four or five hundred sheep,

perfectly wild, which the people contrive to catch and bring away; but how they climbed up to it or how they descended, it was only for themselves to comprehend.

Though the outline of St. Kilda is never sufficiently elevated or varied to afford a picturesque object, it is subject to atmospheric effects which offer endless studies for the higher and poetical department of landscape. Fertile as are the other islands of this sea in all the accidents of colour and light that arise from these changes, they fall far short of this one, where the variations of the atmosphere are incessant, where they are accompanied by effects, equally various and changeable, of light and shadow, of rain and mist and storm, and of clouds in a thousand new and romantic forms and colours such as neither poet nor painter ever imagined; the whole producing the most splendid and unexpected combinations with the land and with an ever restless and changing sea. The cause of these is found in the detached position of this island. Sufficiently high to arrest the course of the clouds from the Western Ocean, it is often involved in mists and showers and blackened by shadows, even when the rest of the atmosphere is settled and clear. Hence also it sometimes precipitates them over all the surrounding sea and sky; thus, while it produces the most brilliant and varied effects, offering to the philosopher the most beautiful examples of the power of land in attracting water from a transparent atmosphere. The value of accidents of light to landscape are well known; and that they are especially incidental to mountainous countries is not less familiar. The forms of the ground in these cases also, confers on them a power and variety which they want in flatter countries. In these misty and, remote landscapes moreover, their effect is greater, while it is more needed, from the comparative

absence of local colour and variety of forms, and from the frequent difficulty of procuring breadths of light and shadow in any other manner. If the uniform tints and outlines of grey precipices or brown mountains require splendid contrasts to give them interest, so the wider sweep of hill and dale must be rendered effective by shadows, not by shade, which it seldom displays with advantage. It is to the pencil of a Turner alone that St. Kilda will furnish employment. A dizzy height from which the eye looks down over jutting crags retiring till they are lost in air; a boiling sea below, without a boundary; dark cliffs beaten by a foaming surge and lost in the gloom of involving clouds; the mixed contest of rocks, ocean, and sky, these are the subjects which it offers to him who, seeing with the poet's eye, knows how to speak the language of poetry with his pencil.

Of St. Kilda, who has communicated his name to this island, nothing seems to be ascertained. At least I have searched the Irish Hagiology for him in vain. In Martin's time, it appears also to have been known by the name of Hirt or Hirta; a term derived from the parent of Terra by the same inversion as our own Earth. The ideas of those to whom St. Kilda was the whole earth, must have been as expanded as those of the mite whose round world is a Dutch cheese. It is a remarkable instance of the zeal or wealth or influence of the early Clergy, that in a spot like this, three chapels should have existed. They were extant in Martin's time, and the very obscure traces of two still remain. The ardour of reformation in Scotland, as if more anxious to destroy what it abhorred than to establish what it approved, seems to have left them without a minister; esteeming the want of religion, we must presume, preferable to what it pleased to term idolatry. The fervour of that holy zeal which has also

condemned the present inhabitants to worship, in their storehouse, may here, according to Johnson's remark, be contrasted with the laziness of the monks who provided them with the means of performing the public duties of religion with respect and decency. But the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge had laudably exerted itself to remove the chief part of this evil, by the establishment of a resident Missionary, on a salary of £35 a year; a sum which, small as it may appear, seems to have been adequate to the providing of competent persons. I understand by a recent report, that the minister who held this office in 1815, the period of my visit, has left the island. But he will probably be replaced. Independently of its more obvious advantages, the presence of such a person serves to connect the people under the form of a political society. In a narrow circle like this, the existence of one superior intellect is a bond of general union, and a habit of deference becomes equivalent to law; as it indeed does in states much larger than St. Kilda, where its value has sometimes scarcely been suspected till the progress of reason, as it is called, had demolished it. At that time, there was no school, and not one of the inhabitants could read. Mr. Quidam hopes that his representations were at least aiding and abetting towards the establishment of the present schoolmaster; while the only reason for his vain-glory is, that it is the only good result, to himself or any one else, that has ever flowed, or ever will, from all his uncountable labours. If you ask who "the Gentleman" is, I must answer as the Jesuits used in similar cases, "talis qualis." English is still unknown here, though now found more or less diffused throughout all the maritime Highlands. I know not if it is to be taught in this school.

The men were well looking, and appeared, as they indeed are, well fed; exceeding in this, as in their dress, their neighbours of the Long Island, and bearing the marks of easy circumstances, or rather, of wealth. But the women, like the generality of that little favoured sex in this country, appeared harsh in feature, and were evidently impressed, even in early life, by those marks so dreaded by Queen Elizabeth, and recorded in the well-known epigram of Plato. This must be the consequence of exposure to the weather; as there is no want of food here as a cause, and as the children of both sexes might even be considered handsome. The late report to which I have just alluded, seems to insinuate that this appearance of wealth is changed: at least as far as relates to the article of dress. The change of system may explain this. It may be thought remarkable that these people, though so remote, should have entirely conformed to the English or Lowland dress. Not a trace of tartan, kilt, or bonnet, was to be seen; so much has convenience gained the victory over ancient usage. The colours of the breachan might indeed have still been retained; but all was dingy brown and blue. Some old writer says, "quo factum ut δευτέραι φροντίδες" suggest themselves "quæ priori loco fuissent ponenda." Hence I ought formerly, instead of now, to have given the true as well as the fanciful etymology of that most important article, breeches. This word is not a bad example of the facility with which false etymologies are suggested; and of a case where the meaning and application are so perfect as to confirm the erroneously assigned derivation. Braccæ are, doubtless, still derived from Breachan, having been a "versicolor," "virgatus" or tartan dress. But this was a coat, or a "sagulum," or a "toga," and not a trousers or an ἀναξυρὶς. The term breeches, however resembling

bracca, comes from the Gothic broek and brog; brook, with the plural broekur in the Icelandic; and such is the true etymology of this utensil. There is a parallel case in the Ducking stool, where the application would justify the most obvious etymology. Yet that is not the true one; it being a corruption of Cucking stool, itself a corruption of Coquine, whence also flows our own term Quean. As to the Tartan, and as I hope for the last time, Hailes imagines that it was introduced by Queen Margaret, because she taught the savages of her new kingdom to dress like gentlemen. It is probable that she introduced the Saxon dresses of her own court; but, on this point, I have formerly adduced enough to prove that our learned antiquary must be wrong. There is a remarkable fact in Montfaucon which seems to aid in establishing the antiquity of the Tartan. It is the figure of a bas relief from the temple of Montmorillon in Poictou, which is thought, and with great probability, to represent an assemblage of Druids, symbolic, or allusive to some obscure usage. In this, one figure of a woman has a checked, or Tartan, dress, and the garment of one of the male figures has also a checked edging or phylactery. Its antiquity is, at any rate, remote; and its probable allusion and origin are confirmed by a sculptured head dug up in Paris, figured in the same work, which somewhat resembles the heads of Ammon, inasmuch as it is horned. The Druidical connexion is here apparent; and this check or tartan is doubtless the very "παμποίκιλος" of Dion, the "χρῶμασι παντοδαποῖς διῃθισμενος" of Diodorus, and the "ἀνθινὸς" of Strabo; described as in use among the Gauls.

The absence of the Minister was a serious impediment to my political enquiries; but when St. Kilda shall hereafter read English and its critics write Reviews, these oversights will be kindly, or otherwise, amended.

Excepting a small tract near the village, the whole island is in pasture, though the soil would admit of cultivation to any extent. But the violence of the west winds limits the agriculture to the south-east declivity, where there is most shelter. This tract is held conjointly by all the village, on the system of run-rig, the ridges being interchanged after three years; and the work is performed by the spade and caschrom. The produce consists chiefly of bear, as in the Long Isle; but it is the finest in the Highlands, having maintained its celebrity even from the time of Martin. "The oats are much inferior in quality, and are very scantily cultivated; nor are potatoes grown to nearly the extent which is usual in Highland farming. There is no attempt at a garden, of course. The same reporter gives a less favourable account of the grain than I received, and says that the returns do not exceed three. A few horses are kept for the purpose of carrying peat, together with some goats, which are milked like the sheep. But the pasture is principally allotted to sheep and black cattle. In Martin's time, the former amounted to about 1000, and the latter to 90; a tolerable measure, probably, of their present proportions. As Soa and Borera contain also from 400 to 500 sheep each, the whole amount of the flocks belonging to St. Kilda must be about 2,000. The breed of sheep is exclusively the Norwegian, distinguished by the extreme shortness of their tails; and the wool is both thin and coarse. They are occasionally of a dun colour; and are subject here, as well as in Iceland, to produce an additional number of horns. This mutton is peculiarly delicate, and highly flavoured. The cattle are small, and both the ewes and the cows are milked. The cheese, which is made of a mixture of these milks, is much esteemed; forming one of the prevailing articles of ex-

port to the Long Island, the mart in which all their little commerce centers. Their other exports consist of wool and feathers; and with these they purchase the few articles of dress or furniture which they require.

On approaching the island, the eye is caught by the great number of small stone buildings scattered over it, naturally mistaken for the habitations of the natives. These are the "pyramids" of Martin, and are used for saving all their produce; their peat, corn, hay, and even their birds. It is remarkable that this practice should have been alluded to by Solinus as common in the Western Islands, and that it should now be entirely unknown everywhere else. It is well worthy of being imitated on all the western shore; where the hay and corn are often utterly lost, and generally much damaged, by the rains and by the slovenly method in which the process of harvesting is managed. These structures are round or oval domes resembling ovens, eight or ten feet in diameter and five or six in height. They are very ingeniously built by gradually diminishing the courses of dry stone; affording free passage to the wind at the sides, while the top is closed by heavy stones, and further protected from rain, by a covering of turf. No attempt is made to dry the grass or corn out of doors; but when cut they are thrown loosely into these buildings, and thus secured from all future risk. It would be a heresy worthy of the Quemadero, to suppose it possible that Arthur's Oon, the temple of the god Terminus, the never-to-be-forgotten cause of antiquarian groans and remonstrance, had been one of Solinus's ovens; a St. Kilda barn. Yet there is a most identical and unlucky resemblance between them, in construction, form, and magnitude; and indeed I have long been inclined to think that this Otho was only a bad halfpenny. It would be very kind, in the mean time,

if the Knights of the Oven would tell us when it was the fashion to build Roman temples like this, of rude and dry masonry, after the Christian æra, and what temples were erected to this personage after the well-demonstrated age of Numa or Tarquin, when this obstinate post of a god refused to budge, even for Jove. But I must not scour the shield too close.

A principal part of the food of these people consists of the flesh and the eggs of sea birds. Among those which frequent the island for the purpose of breeding, the Gannets and Puffins are principally in request. Many species of Gull also breed here, together with Auks, Cormorants, Guillemots, and the more rare Fulmar Petrel. Martin has given a full and correct list. It were well if he had been as full on other matters, instead of filling his book with the history of John the Baptist. The larger birds are taken on their nests, by the hand or by snares; the birdcatchers descending the cliffs by means of a rope of hair secured above. Frightful as this operation may appear, accidents are extremely rare, nor was even the possibility of one suggested to us. The Puffins are taken in their burrows by small dogs; and this department of the chace seemed to be conducted by the children, while the men flew at higher game. It is also usual to take the Auks and other birds that build just below the summits of the cliffs, by knocking them down with sticks as they are blown upwards by the force of the wind as it meets the rock. The tameness of the Puffin is such that they will almost suffer themselves to be taken by the hand; and the Gulls sit on the houses within a few yards of their enemies, just as domestic Pigeons do on our farm houses. Whether this be stupidity or good humour, must be left to a treatise on the metaphysics of birds. The much-abused Goose has a different system; though by

what means his reputation has been so perverted, it would be hard to say. Thus the world gives a bad name, and distributes its praise and blame. He bore a far different character in ancient Rome; and in Greece too, since Aristotle says, that he made a point of keeping silence whenever the Eagles flew over Mount Athos. The Puffins are not so cunning.

Although cod and ling abound here, the people do not fish for them; nor do they seem to take fish from the rocks, as is common in the islands. This must be attributed to the abundant supply of food which their birds yield, and which they prefer to all other diet: although they would prove an intractable morsel to any but a well-educated stomach. But the gastronomy of one country is not the gastronomy of another; and a St. Kilda man would doubtless find it as inconvenient to feed on putrid skate with an Amphytrion of Barra, as a Barra man would to remove an indigestion produced by rancid gannet, by means of the stomach of the same animal stuffed with its own fat.

Whether a fishery might not advantageously be carried on here, is a question which concerns the proprietor more than themselves. Were it even for domestic consumption only, the population might thus be increased; but it would not be effected without first raising the rent of the island. A fishery for exportation could scarcely be productive of any advantage to them: as it is apparent enough that they would inherit little more than the labour, while the proprietor would take the profits. They would have little reason to thank me for such a suggestion; since they have much to lose and little to gain by any change of their present easy system. But I am now writing the observations and opinions of 1815. The Island was then immediately under its very

liberal proprietor. It is now in the possession of a tacksman; so that much modification must have taken place. It cannot be for the better; and had I to write this again from fresh observations, I suspect that I should be compelled to make material changes.

The rent of St. Kilda was then extremely low, compared with the average of insular farms: being only £40, or £2 per family; a sum far inferior to the value of the land, excluding all consideration of the birds. Independently of the food which these afford, that value is considerable: as the whole of the rent was paid in feathers, not in money; while a surplus of these also remained for sale. Thus the land was, in fact, held rent-free; the whole amount being also paid by a small portion of that labour which was more than compensated by the food it produced. It is evident that this rent might have been augmented without any reproach; independently of an increase of value by a division of the common farm, and by the addition of a fishery. Nor need this have diminished the happiness of the people, if moderately and humanely done; as insufficient employment is no great or laudable source of felicity to an uneducated population. If, however, St. Kilda chose to refuse payment and rebel, it would not be very easy to execute a warrant of distress or ejectment without a fleet and an army.

All this may be very pretty speculation for an economist; but I shall be sorry to find that it has influenced the conduct of the proprietor. When we have been saddened at every step by the sight of irremediable poverty and distress in all its forms, it is delightful to find one green place in this dreary world of islands where want is unknown. I trust that St. Kilda may long yet continue the Eden of the Western Ocean. It is a state of real opulence. Their arable land supplies the people with corn, their birds with game, and their cattle with milk. The

surplus of the latter is also consumed in the island; as the long navigation prevents the exportation of live stock. This is fortunate for them; as the want of commerce prevents the acquisition of that disposable wealth which would speedily find its way to the proprietor in the form of rent. It is thus also, in a great measure, that their condition is so far superior to that of the inhabitants of the Long Island, where there is a regular demand for the produce of pasturage, and where the people are, of course, debarred from the use of animal food. But is the history of 1815 that of 1823: I hope so.

If this island is not the Utopia so long sought, where will it be found. Where is the land which has neither arms, money, law, physic, politics, nor taxes; that land is St. Kilda. War may rage all around, provided it be not with America, but the storm reaches it not. Neither Times nor Courier disturbs its judgments, nor do "patriots bursting with heroic rage" terrify it with contradictory anticipations of that "which will ne'er come to pass." Francis Moore may prognosticate, but it touches not St. Kilda. No tax-gatherer's bill threatens on a church door, the game laws reach not gannets. Safe in its own whirlwinds and cradled in its own tempests, it heeds not the storms which shake the foundations of Europe; and acknowledging the dominion of Macleod and King George, is satisfied without enquiring whether George is the first or the fourth of his name.

Well may the pampered native of the happy Hirta refuse to change his situation. His slumbers are late, his labours are light, and his occupation is his amusement, since his sea fowl constitute, at once, his food, his luxury, his game, his wealth, and his bed of down. Government he has not, law he feels not, physic he wants not, politics he heeds not, money he sees not, of war he hears not. His state is his city, and his city is

his social circle; he has the liberty of his thoughts, his actions, and his kingdom, and all his world are his equals. His climate is mild and his island is green; and, like that of Calypso, the stranger who might corrupt him shuns its shores. If happiness is not a dweller in St. Kilda, where shall it be sought.

With a constitution in Church and State so enviably perfect, nothing seems wanting to render this island an absolute Utopia but an Academy. I do not mean the new Gaelic school, nor "Academus' sacred groves," because, unluckily, groves will not grow in Hirta's green isle; no, nor that thing called an Academy by the title of Islington House or any other House, where young gentlemen are taught all the arts, sciences, languages, and much more, besides drawing and dancing at two guineas extra, by somebody's butler who has married somebody's cook; and where the money which cannot be gained by cramming the head, is secured by stuffing the stomach with Norfolk dumplings and other less digestible matters than Greek or Gannets. No, Sir Walter, I mean an Academie, an Academia, a kind of a Royal Society in short; for now, alas, a philosopher in St. Kilda, is "rien, pas même academicien." Were this laudable project put in execution, who knows what learned papers we might shortly have on the winds, and on the laws of the Gannets, and on the gravity of feathers; besides which my half-occupied friends who are now obliged to doze away the fat which they have swallowed till it evaporates from them in the form of gas light, might find noble opportunities of going together by the ears, of electing presidents, sitting in councils, rejecting the papers which some one else ought to have written, and finally, of rivalling in a Bibliotheque Universelle Kildense, the superhuman efforts of all those Republics of Mind which cannot fail to be replete with

Ideas, or Ideal, it is the same thing, when they are so steadily employed in telling the world that such they are. The only difficulty for the Academy of Hirta, is the choice of a name. But they may copy from Bologna and call themselves the Torbidi, or from Florence, and style themselves the Humidi; or, as they deal in feathers, they may borrow the name of Volanti from Naples, or of the Caliginosi from Ancona, which is more suitable still; or, as it is a foggy land, they may be the Fumosi after Reggio, or perhaps, which is best of all, belonging to no region on earth, they may be styled, after Pezzaro, the Eterocliti.

I cannot give you the dark side of this picture if I would, because I saw it not. That, it is said, depends on the state of a man's own stomach; but whether that be true or not, all was bright. There is no place without its miseries, as philosophers say; but I have seen enough of those elsewhere, and am desirous to believe that this is the seat of optimism, the lost Eldorado, one of the never-found Fortunate islands, the happy valley on which there are no gates but those of the inclination. The balance must be struck hereafter by some Mundungus, who will have the double pleasure of setting up his own theory and knocking mine down: it shall never be said that I travelled from Barra Head to the Butt of the Lewis, and found nothing to praise. But I must lead you back to meaner matters.

This is the only place in which I ever saw the quern in use, forming a laborious occupation for the females; as, to supply a moderate family with meal by this wretched mill, is nearly the work of a day. A mill might easily be erected, as in Shetland, on any of the streams; nor could the expense be an obstacle, as the horizontal water mill of the Highlands does not cost many shillings. The stones vary from eighteen inches to three feet in diame-

ter; the upper being fixed on a rude vertical axis of wood, which passes through the lower one and the floor of the hut. This rude building of stone and turf, lies on the edge of a bank, or across some small rivulet, and is scarcely sufficient to admit a man stooping; the hopper being suspended from the roof by four strings. The axis, which is three or four feet long, works on any casual stone, by means of an iron gudgeon, which is the only metal work in the whole composition. Into it are driven the floats, varying from six or eight to eighteen in number, a foot or two long, and either flat or scooped out like spoons, so as to catch the stream as it runs past them. But as the clack of the mill would also set the tongue loose, by relieving the old ladies from their labour, it is perhaps as well that they should go on singing the Ἐπιμύλιον at their querns till their rents are raised. As my friends neither brew beer nor distil spirits, here is another point in which they emulate the Golden Age. They are content with water, and we felt no inclination to teach them any sweet vices. The whisky and the tobacco that we had, would not go far among so many; but those who gained a drink capered and laughed, and those who got none laughed equally to see their neighbours merry.

I puzzled myself to little purpose about the population of St. Kilda, a subject in which greater economists than myself have sometimes floundered. The Minister was absent; and the Minister's wife, having no children, had never considered this abstruse question. In Martin's time they amounted to 180, in twenty-seven *families*; and, as might be expected, they were then in a state of great poverty, increased, if we may judge from his account, by a systematic oppression. The imaginary harsh conduct of Highland proprietors to their tenants, is not therefore a new grievance; as noisy people try now

to make us believe. In 1773, according to Buchan, there were thirty families; yet Macaulay, not ten years after that, states them at less than they are now, or under half the number in Martin's day, without thinking it worth his while to enquire into the reason. He is probably as correct in this as he is about the height of Conochan. How should any thing good ever come from one who has Mac for a prefix to his Boootian name. We might as well look for a treatise on Metaphysics from the Little Weasel and the Great Beaver, or for grace from the collision of Captain Wattle and Miss Row. I hope you do not suspect me of such a pronomen. I found exactly 103 individuals, distributed among twenty families; at present there are 110. We were informed that a native rarely left the island; and the natural question therefore was, why, with such means of living, they did not increase; since that increase takes place in a rapid and distressing degree in all the neighbouring islands. That they might here increase with impunity, is evident from the statement I have already given. The inhabitants accuse the small pox as the cause of this check in former days; and it also appears that, from mismanagement of some kind, they lose an unusual proportion of children. Politically speaking, this is a piece of good fortune; but it would have discomfited the plans of the philosophic Lewis XIV, who, with a view of increasing his French people, thought fit, most sapiently, to offer a reward for the production of ten children; on the same principle, doubtless, as he would have attempted to produce good musket practice by ordering his men to fire at the bull's eye.

All the world has heard of St. Kilda music and St. Kilda poetry, just as all the world has heard of the musical and poetical genius of the Highlanders, of this land of poetry, and spirit of poetry, and poetic imagination, and what not.

We were prepared to bring away some valuable relics; the staves were ready ruled, the dragoman appointed: but alas, there was neither fiddle nor Jew's harp in the island, and it was not remembered when there had been either. The Muses, whom the Abbé Cartaud calls Jupiter's Opera Girls, seemed to have carried their functions to warmer regions. There was a day when he who had slept on the top of Conochan awoke a poet, as was equally true of Snowdon in the days of King Blegored. Hesiod also became one, by eating two of the laurel leaves that grew on Parnassus: you may trace the descent of the tale if you can. In the mean time the poetry has followed the music; and thus common fame maintained its well-earned reputation. We enquired for superstitions with equal success. Martin and the ghosts had vanished together. The Cuckoo, who only used to come to prognosticate the death of Macleod or the Steward, had fled with his notes to other climes.

It was vexatious to be thus disappointed. I therefore watched with great anxiety, to hear and see the whole island join in one universal and wide chorus of sneezing. To my infinite grief, no sneezing was heard, and "none did cry God bless him." But there would be no merit in believing the evidence of our senses: the perfection of faith is to believe against them; Jerusalem is in the east though you were at Mecca or Bagdad, and the Church cannot err. Here my new friends showed that neither Jansenist nor Mesmerist, Rosweyde, nor Mahomet, could have produced a morsel too hard for their digestion. Their stomach of faith is assuredly not less strong than that stomach of the flesh which enables them to dispose of so many tons of Solan goose every year. You know very well, the whole world knows, that whenever a stranger lands in St. Kilda, all the inhabitants "catch a cold;" an event which, comprising a hundred and three noses,

could scarcely be concealed in the very limited number of pocket handkerchiefs which the island contained. But that it was nevertheless a fact, nobody doubted. Every body had witnessed it, from Martin to Macaulay; every body believed it, from Macaulay to the present day, the whole island was agreed upon it, and who then dared to doubt. If testimony could prove any thing, here was surely sufficient warranty for this catch cold; that peculiarly British disease which keeps one half the nation in continual sniffling and the other in continual apprehension; which supplies the conversation that, when it has exhausted all the "skyey influences," is so apt to languish for want of fuel. But human testimony is a strange thing; I thank Æsculapius that I can never sit on a jury. Our dragomen put the question to all the inhabitants individually and collectively: all agreed to the fact with universal acclamation, and the Minister's wife repelled the bare notion of a doubt with as much indignation as she would have done one respecting the truth of the Shorter Catechism. Every body believed it, every body could swear to it. Could instances be produced:—that was not to be found in the record, but the fact was unquestionable. If such was the fact, where was the cold now: every body looked at every other's nose; but not a drop of dew distilled, and not a sneeze consented to rouse St. Kilda's echoes. But what necessary concatenation is there between evidence and belief. All St. Kilda believed in its own belief, and when it ceases to believe, the catch cold will retire to that limbo whither the ghosts have long since fled.

But there are believers of another class, grave and wise personages who imagine that they have no latent regard for the occult and the marvellous, who would fain show cause; whose faith is that of the vulgar, but who are willing to have it thought that they believe as philo-

sophers. There is a similar race too, of which Roger Bacon complained a few centuries ago; who must find a cause for every thing, lest they should appear ignorant of any thing: as if philosophy was matter for show, not for use. "Apparentia quidem" says he "sola tenet eos: et not curant quid sciant, sed quid videantur scire coram multitudine insensata." We must conclude at least that he was too gallant a Friar to have applied this satire to the blue stockings of the year 1214; the "quid videantur scire" "precieuses" who, long since laid in the Red Sea, considered knowledge, in those days, as the dress of the mind; flounces, and ribbons, and rags, the sole use of which was display; wisely judging that the "celata virtus," was of as little use as a lace gown in a bandbox, and that the "scire tuum" was of no value without the "sciat alter." These are the people who can point out the optical nerve in Miss Mac Evoy's fingers, and account for the catarrhal phenomenon of St. Kilda, heedless of King Charles and his salmon. It is all owing to the east wind: "causa pro non causa;" because this is precisely the wind which prevents any boat from landing on the island.

I believe, however, that this piece of philosophy is of another colour, and that we must search for the solution in other books than Dr. Buchan, and in other noses than those of the Minister's wife and her subject kingdom. If you wish to amuse yourself about its origin, further than I have time to do here, I recommend you to consult the learned treatises of Strada and Scoockius; or that of Mons. Morin, if you prefer it. If I recollect right, Martin thinks it was a bad prognostic, ominous of the tacksman's arrival to collect his rents. If he has not given that solution, it is one well adapted to his philosophy. It has also the merit of antiquity. The vocal nose was a kind of familiar spirit in Old Egypt, a ready oracle always at

hand for good and evil, "meaning mischief" when the sun was in Gemini, or at midnight, and so on. Thus our islanders may have inherited it with their other Orientalisms: unless you choose that the Druids should have borrowed it from Pythagoras; since the Greeks had their πτῆθι, and the Romans their Salve, as you may read in Pliny, or still better in Petronius and Apuleius, if you are desirous of a tale. But there is another solution, possibly a better one; as all those who come to St. Kilda do not come for evil. The Kildenses probably design to receive strangers with the sneeze instead of the kiss of peace. It is only a modification of the well-known salutation by noses, though I have not room for all the necessary illustrations of this nasal philosophy. This is the more probable, since Aristænetus will tell you how Parthenis sneezes into her love-letter, thus rousing the corresponding sympathy of her absent lover's nose and heart both. Assuredly the sneeze of Hirta must rather be a compliment than an evil omen; spite of the tacksman, the east wind, Martin, and Gemini; as the Greek and Latin poets, in speaking of a beauty, say that the Loves sneezed a welcome at her birth. That this welcome of the Hirta nose should resound through the whole hundred and three, is also a law plainly derived from the Oriental etiquette of their Tartarian ancestry, whose parentage, both for his countrymen and ours, Vallancey has so clearly proved; since, when the Immortal Lama sneezes, the sound is repeated from nose to nose till it rebounds from the great wall of China. But I cannot afford time or space at present for any more of these "solutions of noses," which so puzzled good Uncle Toby. The deficiencies will, I trust, be supplied by some future commentator, when this sublime work shall in after ages be edited with notes explanatory and critical, by unborn Saumaises or Malones.

The first remark I made on civic life in St. Kilda, was, that female curiosity has been sorely bespattered; for, on our approach, all the women withdrew to their houses with a retiring grace, not less striking, if less elegant, than that of their great mother Eve. As to the interior economy of the habitations, the people have probably experienced the advantages of darkness, smoke, and ashes, sufficiently to prove, experimentally, that they are the best of all possible houses. But they have good doors with wooden locks and keys; which must, of course, be matter of luxury and not of necessity, though utterly unknown in the Highlands in general. Yet Birt mentions them as common in his day. It is probable that, in the times of the Druids, the islanders cultivated pine apples and melons: since the domestic midden, occupying the floor, and growing by successive stratification till the heads of the inmates reach the roof, is plainly a relic of this practice. If the High street of this city is a good deal encumbered with the heads, legs, and wings of gannets, these are probably entertaining enough to the inhabitants, reminding them of good dinners past and better to come. But it actually possesses a flagged causeway, so that the projectors have at least intended well, and we can only blame that corruption which time will introduce into the best-laid projects of man. Swift, in his Tale of a Tub, describes a land of feathers, and perhaps he drew the hint from St. Kilda. The air is full of feathered animals, the sea is covered with them, the houses are ornamented by them, the ground is speckled with them like a flowery meadow in May. The town is paved with feathers, the very dunghills are made of feathers, the ploughed land seems as if it had been sown with feathers, and the inhabitants look as if they had been all tarred and feathered; for their hair is full of feathers, and their clothes are covered with feathers. The

women look like feathered Mercuries, for their shoes are made of a gannet's skin; every thing smells of feathers, and the smell pursued us all over the islands; for the Captain had concealed a sack full in the cabin.

I could not leave St. Kilda without looking at the ruins of that house which once concealed the very celebrated Lady Grange. I thought to have given you her romantic history by way of episode; but after hearing five editions of it, and all of them different, I determined to have no hand in propagating a tale where the ratio of probable falsehood was four to one. So the boat was launched down the rock as it had been drawn up; and, with the cheers of the whole island, we embarked to plough once more the deep.

It is easier to acquire a bad reputation than to lose it; and in whatever manner this common misfortune has happened to St. Kilda, it is not very likely that my efforts will avail to repair it. In Scotland, universally, we had heard of the voyage to this island as of a mighty problem in navigation, as an adventure little less than an expedition to the north pole; and, even in the neighbouring islands, the difficulty of landing, and the impossibility of carrying a vessel near the coast, were represented in the most formidable colours. But I had heard the same of Staffa and of twenty other places; and had long learned to despise these exaggerations, which are the common result of ignorance, cowardice, or a love of the marvellous. For the Sound of Harris, which is the proper channel, a pilot may always be procured at Rowdill, whence the distance is about seventeen leagues. As it is either difficult or impracticable to land in southerly or easterly winds, it is not desirable to have a fair wind for this voyage. St. Kilda itself and its accompanying rocks, are far too conspicuous to be a cause of uneasiness; nor are there any outstand-

ing or sunk reefs except one near Levenish, for which that high rock itself forms a sufficient mark. The whole shore of St. Kilda is so clean, that vessels of any draught may range it within gunshot; and the stream of tide is so inconsiderable that there is no danger from calms, if a moderate offing is secured. The Bay opens to the south-east and is perfectly sheltered on three quarters of the compass. Hence it is exposed to few winds, and those not the predominant ones; while, from its depth and semicircular form, the westerly swell cannot often raise such a sea on the shore as to prevent a boat from landing. In this operation indeed the natives are uncommonly alert and dexterous; and, with a tolerable steersman, there cannot often be a sea in which a boat might not land, unless that were from the westward. There is good clean holding ground in depths ranging from four to seven fathoms, where a vessel of any size may lie for a tide, or more, with fully as great security as in most ordinary harbours; nor is there any difficulty in weighing and running to sea on either tack, should the wind shift so as to blow in shore. But there is no nautical record or chart of this island; so that seamen, impressed with false notions of its dangers, shun the coast when they might often find convenient refuge in the harbour. There is also an anchorage on the north-west side of the island, where there is always smooth water with a south or east wind, and where there is the utmost facility in putting to sea; while a boat may also land here, on different parts of the low rocks that skirt the shore in this quarter. Thus much for the Argonautics of St. Kilda. Thus much for St. Kilda.

FLANNAN ISLANDS. HIGHLAND AGRICULTURE.

THERE was now no night. The Sun, which had so lately crimsoned the western cliffs of St. Kilda, was again tinging the eastern hills, as if unwilling to leave the scenes he made so fair. I had watched the waning twilight, waiting for the night; but the last of evening was the first of morning, and the day had gone and come unperceived. But to compensate this, it was the longest day. I hate anniversaries of all kinds; your victories, and your Christmas days, and your May days, and your birth days; and, worst of all, that worst of all days, our own birth day. And if it is not a victory, or our own birth day, or some other person's, there is some Saint Januarius, or Saint Macarius, or a day for planting cabbages or cutting corns, or some other villanous epoch in the rotation of the Calendar, to remind us that the flight of time is remorseless and steady, and that while we are anathematizing the day and lamenting the lapse, it is passing irrevocably away. The shortest day is a warning, like the longest, and the longest is too short for its uses. Suns rise and set; and it is but to tell us that there is one less in our closing account. If it is Nelson that has triumphed at Trafalgar, or Wellington at Waterloo, let us ring the bells backwards; for so surely do they ring our own knell.

Borera, with its companions Stack-lia and Stack-an-

armin, forms a picturesque and striking group, far eclipsing St. Kilda in the landscape, and rendering it visible from afar, by their more elevated and decided characters. The former contained a hermitage in Martin's time, and is used for feeding sheep, of which it now contains 400. It is equally a haunt of the gannets. The number of these birds which resort to this group of islands is almost incredible. On the preceding evening I had watched many hours in vain for some end to their long lines, which were streaming from all quarters along the surface of the water, steering their course home to their beds. This is a daily occurrence; and whatever the weather may be, in the thickest fogs, their course is straight and undeviating to the mark. So certain is their flight, that boatmen, unprovided with a compass, place implicit reliance on them, as it is said that the Norwegians of old did on their ravens. There is something very mysterious in this property; possessed, not only by the migratory birds, but notedly by dogs, horses, and other animals, as well as by King Jamie's cow, Crummie. Doubtless, you have seen the Shetland horses find their unerring way home in fogs, like these birds; even from places which they had not previously known, and though compelled by the nature of the ground to make long circuits. We must look to Dr. Gall for the explanation of this. I did not, however, examine their organ of geography; but had occasion to admire the beautiful provision made by nature to prevent them from being killed by the stroke of the water when they fall down from aloft on their prey. The skin is so nearly independent of the breast as to be restrained only by a few slight filaments; and the interval being inflated with air, they fall with impunity, sinking to a depth of many feet, as you must often have seen. It is imagined by the fishermen that they fly out

to feed in the morning, even to the southern parts of Britain, returning in the evening. That is scarcely possible, unless their flight is more rapid than that of the albatross; which is supposed to be one hundred and fifty miles in an hour; but, when their strength and rapidity are considered, it is probable that they go to very great distances, as they are found every day on all our coasts, very far from their breeding places.

It was Sunday. It is a favourite maxim of sailors that there is no Sunday in green water; but, in Scotland at least, I have always found it a day of comparative repose and tranquillity on board. The ship must be worked, it is true; but nothing unnecessary or superfluous is done; no greasing a pulley, nor splicing a cringle, nor spinning oakum; and all that is done is performed in sobriety and peace, indicating the day of rest and reverence. Our windlass went round and our mainsail was hoisted, without the argonautic yo-ho; and the deck was paced with unusual gravity and silence. It was with great unwillingness that a boat was ever put out on this day; and the sound of the mineralogical hammer, as not in the authorized list of necessary works, was not heard. I know not but that we might even have incurred the censure of St. Kentegern, who seems to have been the best humoured Saint in the Calendar. Had his sermon against mock gravity and hypocrisy been preached a few centuries later, it would have cost him another tonsure than that of his scalp, when he calls it "fidei abrenunciatio, caritatis exinanitio, veritatis excæcatio," and so on. The successors of the apostle of Geneva would have possibly given him a share with Servetus.

But I was nevertheless obliged to take to the boat and to row for the Flannan islands. The captain's fear of drowning had fallen on him again, as it had done in the

Sound of Harris, and I could not persuade him to come within ten miles of the land; as, at St. Kilda, he had hove to twenty miles off, vowing that he was within a mile of the shore. He seemed to think that his vessel drew fifty fathoms. This was not the other captain, I beg to remark; who was as bold as a lion. Fat is a fearful substance; tallow is timid. Ask old Jack if this be not so. The Spartans knew it well, and fed their soldiers accordingly. So did the philosopher who wrote the apologue of the two dogs. Fear is the result of good eating, the fear of death is the produce of venison and turtle. "Terrible is the thought of death to him that is full of meat." It is the gourmand who wishes to live his dinners over again. "Ah, Davy, Davy, these are the things which make a man afraid to die." If dinner is the most important business of a man's life, as Dr. Johnson says, it is that also which is always new, and of which he never tires. He becomes wearied of all else, in time. Every thing palls, all proves vanity; except dinner. He therefore who dines best, he who is "full of meat," as "the Preacher" says, and who longs to be as full to-morrow as he was to-day, he is the man to whom the foe and the fever are as the undertaker and the hour glass, to whom every rock is Scylla and every eddy Charybdis. Never, my dear Scott, when you become first Lord of the Admiralty, give a fat captain the command of a ship in the Western Islands.

It is said that there are seven of the Flannan islands. That is very possible, probably it is very true; but I could only count six. Certainly there ought to be seven, because the Laird of Lochow had seven castles, and so had the King of Bohemia and King Fergus the first: to say nothing of the seven wise men of Gotham. If Sterne had looked into Peter Bongus, instead of stealing in the second-hand

way that he did, Dr. Slop would not have let us off for so short a list; since, besides the seven stars, the seven metals, the seven sacraments, the seven hairs of Samson's head, the seven senses, the seven planets, the seven champions of Christendom, the seven wise men of Greece, the seven wonders of the world, the seven golden candlesticks, and at least a folio page of sevens more, Peter has discovered that the human body has seven interior and seven exterior parts, though he would be a dexterous anatomist who could reckon them. Be the Flannan islands six or seven, they are called the Seven Hunters, and are surrounded by cliffs, and covered with rich verdure; the largest maintaining some sheep, and the remaining value consisting in the feathers of their numerous birds.

Our landing roused the whole colony, and the alarm excited by its flight spread itself in a few minutes through all the islands. A cloud of birds of all descriptions rose into the air; almost darkening the sky as they wheeled round in successive strata over our heads, till plunging in succession into the sea, they covered it with feathered floats that whitened the surface far round. I have often been entertained with the extraordinary concerts of the sea fowl, in Ailsa, in the Shiant isles, and elsewhere; but I never heard any orchestra so numerous, so various, and so perfect, as this one, which seemed to consist of almost all the birds that frequent the seas and rocks of these wild coasts. I should, perhaps, do injustice to the performers, did I attempt to assign the parts which each seemed to take in this concert; but it was easy to distinguish the short shrill treble of the Puffins and Auks, the melodious and varied notes of the different Gulls, the tenors of the Divers and Guillemots, and the croaking basses of the Cormorants. But the

variety of tones was far beyond my powers of analysis, as, I believe, Pennant had found it before me. It may appear ludicrous to call this music melodious, or to speak of the harmony formed by such ingredients: yet it is a combination of sounds to which a musician will listen with interest and delight, although the separate cries of the different individuals are seldom thought agreeable. Few of the notes in this concert could, perhaps, have been referred to the scale, if separately examined; yet the harmony was often as full and perfect as if it had been the produce of well-tuned instruments, and the effect was infinitely superior to that which is often heard in a spring morning among the singing birds of the forest, while it was so entirely different as not to admit of any comparison.

In the singing birds, the beauty of the performance of the individuals depends on the tone, or "timbre," and on the melodies and execution: on sweetness, quality, variety, range, and division. The "vocal concert of the grove," of which poets have written, and which those who are not poets listen to with delight, possesses no harmony, except in poetry; because there are few instances in which these songsters produce tones in the diatonic, or even in the chromatic scale; without some basis of which, it cannot exist to us. The Cuckoo, who sings a minor third in descending, is no partaker of the general symphony; the Yellow Hammer, who ascends to a major third, the Nightingale, whose chromatic notes are often so beautiful and so true, and the Blackbird, Thrush, and Chaffinch, who also possess diatonic tones, are as nothing amidst the crowd of sounds, where minuteness of intervals and restlessness of melody and modulation, together with the absence of all depth, solidity, and continuity of tone, are such as not to admit of that combi-

nation and relation of sounds which constitute the harmony that can alone be appreciated by our ears. In the sea birds, there are few tones and few notes, but they are decided and steady. The body of sound is also far greater; and, however inferior in variety or sweetness the notes of the individuals may be, there is much more variety in the harmonious combinations, and in that which musicians would call the contrivance and design. Very often they reminded me of some of the ancient religious compositions, which consist of a perpetual succession of fugue and imitation on a few simple notes: and sometimes it appeared as if different orchestras were taking up the same phrases. Occasionally, the whole of the sounds subsided, like those of the Æolian harp as the breeze dies away, being again renewed on the excitement of some fresh alarm. In other places I have heard similar concerts performed among colonies of Gulls alone; and with a variety and effect still more surprising, when the limited tones and powers of this tribe are considered. On one of these occasions, at Noss Head, in Shetland, I could scarcely avoid imagining that I was listening to a portion of Rossini's Barbiere di Siviglia, "Mi par d'esser colla testa in un orrida fucina," so exact was the rythm as well as the air and the harmony.

A musician, however, will be little surprised at what others may perhaps consider a vagary of my own imagination, or as a little romance intended to enliven a dull subject. It is well known that when many sounds are produced together, belonging, perhaps, to the enharmonic scale, or perhaps to no scale at all, there are some which are not heard, while others are so regulated and modified by those of more power, or by particular notes in a chord, as to produce perfect harmonies. The ear seems, in fact, to have great facility in rejecting what does not suit it;

and thus, that alone is dwelt on, of which the impression is pleasing, or consonant to harmonic experience and habits; while it is also well known, that some tones have the power of entirely suppressing others, or of modifying them in such a manner as to produce true harmonies, which, if heard, they would have disturbed. The great proportion of discords to be found in these feathery concerts, does not, therefore, prevent the agreeable effects which I have here been describing. On the contrary, they are thus increased; and the music, indeed, assumes hence a far more scientific character, and one which would be far better appreciated by a modern thorough-bred musician than by an ordinary hearer. Notwithstanding popular opinion and ancient rules, our late German composers have shown, by the increase and the variety of their discords, that very few concords are required to produce agreeable effects: still less that they are required to produce striking ones, but rather the very reverse; and that the ear may be educated to take delight in that which once appeared intolerable. Indeed Nature herself seems to have proved that it is she who has laid this foundation of delight, in the examples she has produced of children, whose faculties, otherwise undeveloped, have displayed this sensibility to the beauty of those harmonious combinations which have commonly been called discords. My squalling performers of the Flannan isles seem to have been taught by nature that which has required a succession of Haydns, Mozarts, and Beethovens, to bring to its present state of what must not yet be called perfection; and she might long ago have taught us, had we been able or willing to learn, that chords require no preparation, that discords may be suspended, or introduced, or united, or multiplied, in a thousand ways once thought impossible, and that even the chord of the

thirty-fifth was not a discovery reserved for themselves. I will not say that the gulls, the auks, the gannets, and the cormorants, of Ailsa and the Flannan isles, will compete for the palm of music with Haydn's Chaos, or with the solemn and wild strain of extraordinary and superhuman harmonies with which the Ghost first addresses Don Giovanni: but the educated musician who shall chuse to attend to these marine symphonies, will find that modern inventions have unwittingly been only following nature, and may thence borrow valuable hints for his own art. I wish that I had been a musician. I would have out-done Tartini, and the gulls of the Œbudæ should have been my teachers, instead of King Mahound.

The accompaniments of time and place, the solitude and the scenery, added not a little to the strange and impressive effect of this extraordinary concert. The blue canopy of heaven, along which the gold and crimson clouds of evening were now beginning to stream from the westward, and the wide expanse of the green sea on which the last rays of the sun just began to throw a faint gleam of red, formed a concert-room somewhat different from the Philharmonic furnace, hot with mortality and gas, and breathing suffocation and pestilence. Here, a gentle and sweet breeze waved the long grass that hung over the edges of the cliffs; and the gentle roll of the heaving billow rising against the rocks as they turned their gilded masses to the setting sun, murmured as it subsided in a narrow line of silvery foam at their feet.

Two saints seem to contest for the honour of giving their name to the Flannan islands. Flannan was Bishop of Killaloe in 639, and he is canonized in the Irish Calendar. But St. Flann was the son of Maol-duine, Abbot of Iona, who died in 890; and who is to decide? Martin tells us that, on Eilan-more, there were then remaining

the ruins of a chapel dedicated to this last personage; but Martin's authority is not absolute; particularly as he had never heard of the prior saint. To whomever the right of patronage belongs, Martin says that when the fowlers visited these islands, they prayed three times round these ruins before proceeding to their business, leaving their upper garments on a stone. The same process was repeated for vespers; after which it was not permitted to kill a fowl. All these islands were considered as places of inherent sanctity, particularly disposing men to devotion. They seem further to have wrought as a perpetual ordeal; as, if any of the partners in this chase stole and ate a bird unknown to his friends, the sanctity of the ground caused it to operate as an emetic. The proceedings required for disgorging ill-gotten wealth in our own day, are somewhat more operose and a little more expensive. Saint Ipecacuanha would deserve a double-sized red letter in the Calendar, could he be revived and rendered operative again. One of these islands, called Lusbirdan, or the island of little men, was inhabited by pigmies. Whether these pigmies were only fairies, or of the same breed which attacked Hercules and gave rise to Gulliver, or of Homer's race, Mr. Martin does not condescend to say. At any rate, it is not very surprising that they have disappeared; as they must have stood as bad a chance with cormorants as with cranes, and have probably all been devoured some time since.

As there is no agriculture carried on in the Flannan islands,—that is a very good reason for treating you with an essay on that subject;—and lest you should consider this a non sequitur, I beg you to remember that people never think so much of eating as when there is nothing to eat. There is another reason; and it is, that you have not yet had time to forget that former dissertation on

pasturage. It is somewhat awkward to be condemned to split our remarks and our philosophy into scraps and fragments; yet if the traveller travels, and the things that ought to have come to day only chuse to come to-morrow, who is to blame. I ought, however, to say, that there are sheep in one or two of these islands, and that whoever catches them deserves to eat them for his pains.

The greater part of the western rocky shores presents a system of agriculture which appears almost incredible to a traveller who is yet new to the Highlands. Not that it is limited to the sea coasts only; as it prevails wherever the crofting system has been adopted. It is chiefly remarkable, however, in those islands, which, like Coll and Rona, consist of gneiss; or on the shores of the mainland, which, like Assynt and Loch Inver, are formed of the same rock. In such places, the ground is peculiarly encumbered with protruding rocks; the only soil which they contain being dispersed among these, often in very small portions, and in a most intricate manner. Such as it is, it must, however, be cultivated, since every one is compelled, by the system of extreme division, to raise his own grain and potatoes. The appearance of such a tract when in cultivation, is not a little extraordinary, since, from the minuteness of the patches, it resembles a collection of webs of baize or cloth put out to dry. The smallness of these gives them an aspect almost ludicrous; especially when widely separated from each other, so as to appear like distinct corn-fields. It is no exaggeration to say that I have measured such a field of corn, not more than forty feet long and two wide. I believe that we might even find smaller ones. If, at first sight, this appears a very melancholy and fruitless kind of farming, it is much less so when fairly examined. In such rocky soils, and among these irregularities, the

plough could not be used, even were the space greater; and if the business is to be conducted by the spade or the Highland caschrom, it is pretty nearly indifferent whether there are twenty small patches to be dug, and sown, and reaped, or two. As the spade cultivation is the most effective, as the people have abundance of spare time, and as they have little capital to purchase horses or ploughs, I know not but that this system, bad as it appears at first, is the best that could have been adopted. There are many other things, not only in this country, but all the world over, respecting which a little reflection and a more minute acquaintance with all the collateral circumstances, would induce us to reserve, if not often to change, our first superficial judgments. It would be well if those who have given themselves and others much fruitless trouble on these and similiar subjects connected with the Highlands, would learn to distinguish between what is abstractedly best, and what is attainable; what the present system will admit or bear.

The caschrom is a far more powerful instrument than the spade; yet it is not so effectual in pulverising the soil. It is, in fact, rather a plough than a spade; the only difference being, that it carries a share without a coulter, and is pushed by men instead of being drawn by horses. As far as is yet known, this primitive plough is confined to the Highlands: no traces of it at least have been found elsewhere; not even in India, where the simplest draught plough, formed merely of a crooked branch, is still in use. We might imagine the caschrom to have been the contrivance of man where the use of animals was unknown. It is generally wrought by two men: but having no provision for turning the turf, that is done by a lateral motion of the long lever. It would be an improvement, in many places, to adopt the light Swedish

plough: since that is so contrived as to admit of being lifted round or over stones, and is in use precisely in the same sort of land as that under review.

It is plainly impossible that agriculture can be conducted properly, under such a system and in such land as this. Thus far the Highland small tenantry may be excused, since they could not easily do much better. It were to be wished, however, that they would farm to more purpose where they labour under no such disabilities; since there is far too much of the ancient system yet remaining. It would not indeed be very easy for a cursory observer to find specimens of the worst agriculture of former days; but there are many places where that is as perfect as the most strenuous enemy to innovation could desire. In time, it must be hoped that it will be only known by such records as this: it need not be preserved, like a clymore, as a relic of ancient and regretted days.

It is understood that, in former times, all the lands of the vassals, or clan, were held through tacksmen, who were then the offsets of the family, the brothers, uncles, nephews, or sons of the chief, his society in peace and his officers in war. This custom descended, even after the original state of things with which it was connected had ceased: and the tacksman became merely a wholesale tenant, retailing farms to the people, and, as the responsible person, saving the necessity of a steward. It is now nearly expired. Canna is still held in this manner: and when I was in Lewis, there was there also a considerable number of tacksmen. St. Kilda, as has just been mentioned, has recently been let in this manner. To the smaller tenants, the lands were let in joint tenantry: a certain number of families uniting to cultivate one farm, and the whole, individually, as well as jointly, being re-

sponsible for the rent. These associations produced the groups of houses called towns, which are marked as villages in the maps. This system is so far from being expired, that many such towns and joint farms may be found all over the country: even on the Lowland border, and in the very centre of systems of large farms and improved cultivation. But in the ancient practice, there was added the holding by run-rig; by which every individual in the joint farm was obliged to change his lot or ridge every year, with some other person belonging to it. It would not be easy to invent a worse method of treating land, or of checking the industry of tenants; but I believe that it is totally abolished, though the name continues to be occasionally used.

This seems to have been a common practice among the German tribes, and appears to be a part of that to which Tacitus alludes when he says, "agri ab universis per vices occupantur; arva per annos mutant." I wish Tacitus had been a German Professor himself, and had made his book a folio instead of writing in enigmas, as he too often does. If a great book is a bad thing, because it contains more than you want, it is at least better than that which contains less. I know not any writer whom we long more to beat into speaking, as Epaminondas threshed the Spartans out of their affectation of short speeches into long ones; into politeness, as he calls it. Whatever the entire meaning of this passage is, Blackstone considers that it relates, by comparison, to the feudal holdings which were first at the lord's will and then rendered certain for one or more years, while, in Germany, the lands were annually divided by the leaders in general councils. This explanation is, indeed, confirmed by what Cæsar says of the Gauls, that "neque quisquam agri modum certum habet;" but that the magistrates

and "principes" allotted the lands every year in a compulsory manner. The reasons were, that their thoughts might not be diverted from war, that the strong might not encroach on the weak, and that they might not be tempted to luxury, by permanent possession. But whatever was the motive, it still seems probable that this was the real origin of the Highland custom, as no practical use for it can be assigned. But to return from this antiquarian digression.

The system of limiting the agriculture to the immediate vicinity of the dwellings, was formerly rendered necessary by the frequent warfare in which the clans were engaged; and from this, as well as from many other obvious causes, it was both imperfect and scanty. Before the introduction of the potatoe, it was also limited to barley (bear), and oats. The pasturage was rather an universal common than a common for each farm; undefined and neglected, and free to any number of animals which the tenants chose to let loose on it. Shetland is still what the Highlands once were; a fact which those who have written on this subject seem to have overlooked; and if we desire to see how this system operated, we have thus an opportunity of examining the effects. Sheep were not then an essential part of the farming system: being less adapted to the state of the country and the habits of the people than black cattle. These formed the chief revenue of the great proprietor and the larger tenants, and indeed nearly the only disposable wealth of the community. They were the pecunia of the country, in the original sense of the term; the price of foreign commodities; the objects and causes of war no less than of private plunder, the reward of success, and the dowry of high-born dames as of the lowest cottager's daughter. If Peggy brought her only cow

with herself to Donald's arms, "an hundred oxen roared" at the wedding of his chief.

Nearly the whole farm was considered as infield; and the practice was to produce as many crops in succession as possible. When the land could bear no longer, it was turned loose to nature, till time allowed a repetition of the same routine. Occasional pieces of outfield were cropped once or twice in a similar manner, and then left to their repose. In a general sense, the practice is little better now; on the smaller farms, indeed, though now held in separate tenantry, it is nearly as bad as under the old joint system; excepting that it has been modified for the better by the introduction of potatoes. It is by no means unusual to push the system of cropping so far that the last year's labour is lost: I have often seen fields that could not have reproduced the seed. It is no exaggeration to say that I had the patience to count the ears of barley in a field in Sandy isle, and that there were scarcely six in a square yard; the remainder of the crop consisting of Holcus avenaceus. When the warning has gone thus far, it is obeyed. Before the potatoe, no green crop was known; to this day, the turnip is neglected; and that, in many cases, even on large farms, and in the hands of opulent tenants, under circumstances which may well excite surprise. The cultivation of grasses is no more known in the modern than in the ancient system, except on the borders of the Lowlands, or where Lowland tenants occupy Highland farms.

The minuter details of the system of tillage were equally imperfect, and have, even yet, undergone little improvement. Not only is the ploughing conducted in the most inefficient and slovenly manner, but is limited to spring; the utility of this operation in autumn or winter appearing to be unknown. It is by no means un-

usual to sow on the first furrow, without cross ploughing; even where there is no excuse for this practice in the lightness of the soil, as is the case in Tirey. Thus the crops appear to a stranger as if they had been drilled; with this only difference, that for every line of corn there is a parallel one of weeds. Of course, all the advantages that might be derived from deep ploughing or pulverising the soil are sacrificed. As far as relates to the sandy soils, it would often be for the interest of a farmer to leave them in pasture; but in the present divided system of farms, that is impossible, because every man must raise grain from his lot, be that what it may. On the sea shores, the cultivation of such soils is rendered profitable by the command of sea weed which these offer: although the people in general are far from taking all the advantage of it which they might. In some places, however, they raise crops in this manner that will astonish a southern traveller; since they are produced from the pebbles of the sea beach. The barley is sown on the sea weed that is strewed on these; and, as it rots, the grain drops with it into the interstices; so that when the harvest is ready, it is seen growing on a surface of naked and polished pebbles.

The construction of the ploughs and the harrows is as defective as every thing else, and scarifying and rolling are totally unknown; nor has the hoe and drill system yet been introduced, even for potatoes, except in the hands of a few opulent tenants, who have adopted the Lowland system of farming. In reaping, the sickle is exclusively used; but considering the necessity of expedition, in a climate so varying, and where labour cannot be purchased, the scythe might often be introduced with advantage. But so little activity is shown in the business of harvesting, urgent as it almost always is, that we need

not be surprised at any other kind of neglect. Taking the country altogether, more than half the loss experienced from the autumnal rains, is the consequence of procrastination and indolence. It is often painful to see those crops which form half the support of the people, dead-ripe and blown away by the winds, or drenched in the rain till they are rotten; when, by timely reaping, by getting up at four instead of ten, and by really working instead of lounging about, talking and gazing, the whole might have been saved with the greatest ease.

Fallowing is not in use, nor indeed could such a system of farming afford it. Of the advantages to be derived from rotation of crops, the smaller tenantry have scarcely any idea. If potatoes are planted, they are generally so highly manured that this serves for the succeeding crops of corn; or fresh manure in smaller quantities, when it can be procured, is used with these. Thus barley succeeds to potatoes, and that is followed by oats, generally till the land refuses to yield any more. Sometimes the barley is sown with manure, and then oats succeed as before. Rye is occasionally sown, after oats will grow no longer; but it is little used, and only in the sandy soils. As might be expected from such a proceeding, the crops are both short and thin. Pease and beans are totally unknown; except in a few spots, chiefly in the vicinity of the Lowlands; nor, as I just remarked, has the turnip cultivation any where made any progress among the smaller tenants, while in the remote districts it has not even been introduced. The same is true of clover and the artificial grasses.

All the improvement which the cultivation of the bear admits, seems to be earlier sowing, and a better choice of seed; but the first is the most essential; because the harvest is not often fit for cutting till the October rains come on. To procure an early harvest in the Highlands,

is always a most important object; particularly in the interior lands of high elevation, where the frosts of winter not unfrequently find the corn green, and where the only ripening it experiences is death. The oat in most use is the grey oat; a wretched and unproductive variety. Many attempts have been made to introduce a better kind, but as yet with very imperfect success; the natives being attached to this on account of its property of resisting the high winds. The miserable aspect of these crops is often such that, to a stranger, they do not appear worth the trouble of cutting: in any other system of farming, that would in fact be the case; since the returns are sometimes scarcely equal to the seed. Three for one, in the ordinary farming of the smaller tenants, is said to be an average return. But see again how authorities differ. Martin says that the common return is thirty-five, but that some lands in Sky produced a hundred fold. This ghost-seer must have had as many eyes as Argus, and have squinted with the whole. Lord Macdonald would be glad to find this true: and so would his namesake the author of the Agricultural Survey; who tells a different tale. It is the same observer who describes Lewis as the most fertile and rich and green island under the sun. It might have been green and fertile in the time of Saturn; or of Pytheas, who seems to have had a happy knack at travelling. But it is black enough now: I am sorry to say it, for the sake of my very good friends its owners. But so fertile are the islands, says good Mr. Martin, that even the sheep and the pigs and the women have twins: while the duplicate of each is the property of the chief; one of his acquaintance having received sixteen of these human superfœtations as his due. "Et voïla justement," says Voltaire, "comme on ecrit l'histoire."

It was not without some difficulty that the potatoe was introduced into the Highlands. It was known at Inver-

ness, at least in 1720, but does not appear to have made much progress, twenty years afterwards. Indeed, even then, it was but partially cultivated in the Lowlands. As late as 1770 it was still making a slow progress, even upon the Highland border. It now, however, extensively cultivated; and to its use must be attributed the increased means and improved food of the people, as well as the great augmentation in number which they have experienced. In ordinary soils it is managed in the usual manner; but scarcely ever in the drill method, except in Lowland hands. On the sea shores, and in the petty farms, the usual practice is that of lazy beds. In rocky and thin soils, the earth is piled up by the spade; and in peat mosses, the same practice is followed, or else deep drains are cut, so as to produce the same effect. Thus the peat is drained and easily maintained in a loose state; while, being highly manured, and generally with sea weed, it produces very good crops. This is a practice which would, however, in many cases, admit of improvement. Much labour is employed in making up these beds, while the quantity of drained peat thus gained is inconsiderable. Were the same work bestowed on cutting drains, much larger portions might be reclaimed; and it would not require much contrivance to direct such labour to that end, so as even sometimes to render it effectual towards improving the general estate. The sets are dibbled in and carefully weeded; a practice almost utterly neglected with regard to corn; so that the whole of the potatoe cultivation offers a strong contrast to the remainder of the agriculture of the Highlands. It is easy enough to explain this difference. To alter any thing which relates to the culture of grain, would imply innovation; and that is always difficult. The mere introduction of the potatoe was the innovation in this case: it operated by its own intrinsic weight, and necessarily

carried with it its own rules; so that no other breach of ancient habits was required.

The cultivation of flax is almost universal; but the quantity raised is nevertheless inconsiderable, and scarcely ever exceeds what is required for domestic consumption. Though the crops are far cleaner than any other, they are thin and short, from insufficient manure and bad seed, the repeated produce in succession of the same soil. The small tenants cannot purchase foreign seed, because they have nothing to offer in return; and if we will recollect how little can be done in agriculture without capital, the poor Highlanders will be found to deserve far less censure than agricultural critics are apt to pass on them. Those who advocate small farms might take useful lessons on that subject in this country, no less than in the wine districts of France. The cultivation of hemp is so rare, that I have scarcely seen it five times in all my peregrinations; which, I need now scarcely say, comprise the whole country. Such crops as I have seen were very limited in extent, and far from strong. The produce is applied to making twine for nets and fishing lines.

The laying down of fields for grass after being exhausted by corn, is as unknown as enclosing, draining, irrigation, and top dressing. Such neglect is the more unpardonable, because, with respect to most of these operations, the very nature of the country offers facilities rarely found in the Lowland districts. The blowing of calcareous sand upon the pastures, as mentioned in North Uist, is a natural process of top dressing which ought to have opened the eyes of these maritime farmers on this subject. Yet, easy as it would be to imitate this process by liming, or by carrying this very sand where it is in so many places of easy access, I never saw the practice but once, and that was in Colonsa; which is, however,

a perfect Lowland farm in respect to management. To enclose against the depredations of cattle, where the pastures and the cultivation are so intermixed, would appear a very obvious necessity; and, generally speaking, there is no excuse for the neglect, because of the abundance of materials. Though the labour of the children who are employed in tending the cattle, and who thus become the substitutes for enclosures, were of no value, this neglect is often the cause of considerable losses, in consequence of the cattle breaking into the corn. But even though this never happened, whereas it is extremely frequent, there are other advantages from enclosing, which are equally visible where Nature has taken this charge on herself. There are many situations where cultivation is rendered absolutely impossible, in consequence of the violence of the winds; and innumerable ones where the grain is shook or blown away, or the crops laid, where the whole evil might be prevented by small enclosures. But neither these little tenants, nor indeed their betters, are yet aware that the early frosts, by which they often suffer so severely, might be prevented by the same means. To these must be attributed the most severe losses which the Highland farmers undergo, namely, that of their potatoe crops; which are often killed before they are ripe, in the exposed parts of the country. These deadly hoar frosts are generally the consequence of evaporation produced by the action of the winds, and may often be completely prevented by the shelter of enclosures. Though Philosophy were unable to explain the cause, Nature herself points out the remedy; for, among the rocky and uneven soils, it is not uncommon to find one crop frozen, when another, not many yards distant, has escaped; the difference depending entirely on the state of shelter.

The good effects of natural drainage are seen in a

thousand situations; and I have elsewhere remarked how the state of Canna and St. Kilda point out the advantages that might be derived from imitating these natural processes. If labour were to be hired, or if the tenant, who must here be his own labourer, were fully occupied, there would be some excuse for such neglect. At present there is seldom any; because, during a large part of the year, he is unemployed, and, consequently, idle. The hay of the Highlands is most commonly the produce of natural meadows; but a much larger part is obtained from road-sides and waste scraps of land. The former, and indeed the latter also, is generally coarse in itself, and further contaminated by rushes and other aquatic plants; so that no horse who has not been educated on it, or starved into compliance, will eat it. At the same time, it is saved at a great expense of time and labour; while, being as late a crop as the corn, both harvests are often going on at the same time, and the hay is rarely stacked without much damage from the rains, by which indeed it is sometimes utterly destroyed.

One of the most remarkable and wasteful features of the ancient system of Highland farming, was the extraordinary number of horses kept for real or imaginary purposes. It is now fast expiring, and must ultimately terminate entirely; but it may still be found. It is not long ago since Tirey contained fifteen hundred; a number probably ten times greater than its actual wants, as the rearing of horses, either here or elsewhere, for a market, was never a part of the system of rural economy. When I was last in Sky, improved as that island has recently been, I found forty upon one joint farm, where the whole labour might easily have been performed by six. In a parish of Sutherland there were, not long ago, twenty ploughs, implying the same number of horses, where two might have performed the whole work with ease.

This superfluity was necessarily connected, to a certain degree, with the old system of joint farms; and is not easily avoided, on the new plan of crofting. The causes are various; and thus while something little short of force has been in some cases necessary, in others the evil has subsided of itself, from the disappearance of the practices on which it depended. The want of roads has been, and is yet, one cause of the superfluity; as horses must be employed for the transport of kelp from the sea shores, and of peat from the mosses. Ancient habits, however, cause the people to persist in this practice, in many places where carts or cars might be adopted. A superfluous number is also called for by the inefficient strength and stature of the breeds commonly in use, and from their bad condition in consequence of insufficient food. A better race and better management, would tend therefore to diminish this evil in some degree. But one of the main causes of the great excess, was rivalship in the possessors of the joint farms; pride inducing every man to keep as many as he could, whether he had work for them or not. In these cases, remonstrance on the part of the landlord or steward often proved in vain; and instances are on record, where these persons have had recourse to a kind of law not unusual in former times, that of shooting them. I myself witnessed a sort of wresting of the law for this purpose, which may perhaps surprise those who are less acquainted with the country than they imagine, and which consisted in persuading the assessor of taxes to charge all beyond the number which the steward thought necessary, as horses kept for pleasure.

To the spirit of rivalry or pride, (no bad engine had it been applied to a better purpose,) must be added, the lax manner in which the pastures were held. Thus their value was undefined, nor does it seem to have entered into the conception of the small tenants, that a

given portion of land could feed but a given number of animals, whether held in common or not, and that they might have increased the number of their useful animals by diminishing their useless ones. But even in the modern crofting system, it is difficult to avoid entertaining an unnecessary number of horses; as those required for a small tenement might equally do the work of a much larger one. In fact there is no one of these small crofts that could find constant work for one. Yet the evil is much diminished; as he who now possesses and can see his own lot of land, forms a better conception of its value; while, being restricted to the pasturage of a certain number of animals, or paying rent for each by the head, he is not long in learning that he may derive more benefit from cattle or sheep, than from horses for which there is no employment.

I must not enter more minutely into a subject, which, more minutely treated, could only interest agriculturists. Such a sketch is sufficient to convey a notion of the general state of Highland cultivation; limiting the term Highland, of course, to those districts where the ancient manners and habits still reign. To suppose that it included all the Highlands, would be to repeat the error which has perverted the general judgment on so much that relates to this country. The Highlands are, as mathematicians love to speak, a sort of evanescent quantity, and can only be caught and fixed at a few points: while I write, they are changing, and that which is now true, may, in a few years, be false. Great innovations are daily making in the system of agriculture; and chiefly by the larger proprietors who reside, by Low-country tenants, and by Highlanders who have studied the Lowland cultivation. In some districts, the smaller tenants are also copying their better-informed neighbours, and this is chiefly the case on the borders of the Low country, where

all Highland peculiarities alike, are fast disappearing. But there is so little in their power, that censure could scarcely answer any useful end, even were it better merited than it really is. If they are often deserving of blame for want of activity, they cannot justly be censured for what arises from ignorance; precluded as they too often are from information or good example, and having, in reality, no resource but to follow the imperfect practices that have descended to them from their ancestors. If "la coutume est un traitresse maitresse d'ecole," as Montaigne tells us, it is not easy to see where they are to find a better. I believe that much of the censure in this case, is far better deserved by those whose duty and interest it equally is to enlighten them. All the people of all the world are wedded to ancient practices, and the more so in proportion to their ignorance; since conceit and ignorance always go hand in hand. Nor do I see that the Highlanders are, in this respect, more prejudiced or more mulish than other nations: I am much inclined to think, on the contrary, that they are a docile people. Every where, time is diminishing the number of ancient prejudices; and that, in an accelerating ratio, as education and knowledge spread. The progress of information is daily limiting these to a narrow circle; and when once ancient systems are discovered to be prejudices, their downfall is not far off. To make these things matters of reproach to the Highlanders particularly, is unjust; because similar faults belong to all people and all times. And he who will candidly examine the state of the country and the people, and recollect the short period that has passed since the very possibility of improvement was entertained by them, ought rather to be surprised and pleased that so much has been done in so short a time against such a weight of

difficulties, than that any thing should remain to be accomplished.

It is the business of an agriculturist, not mine, to point out all the circumstances in Highland farming which admit of, and require, improvement. A few, however, are so obvious as to strike even greater idlers than myself. One of the most glaring evils is the destruction of the harvest by the late autumnal rains, or by the early frosts, already noticed. Better tillage, in the numerous points which this implies, would produce earlier crops, and thus guard against much of the evil; while the remainder might be diminished by enclosures and by greater industry in saving the harvest.

The introduction of green crops, is, however, the great and difficult innovation from which the chief advantages might be derived. Independently of the rotation which would thus be commanded, this convertible system, as it is called, would tend better to divide the labours of the year. At present, a great part of the tenant's time is unoccupied; while the whole accumulated labours of the farm are pressing on him at one particular season. The same system would not only preserve the stock on the farm fit for service when wanted, but would enable the farmer to rear a greater number, as well as a better breed, of cattle and sheep, and to deliver them at the market in better condition. On the improvement to be made in grass lands I need say no more, and I shall take some other opportunity of considering the advantages to be derived from the increased cultivation of flax and hemp.

LEWIS. LOCH BERNERA. STONE CIRCLES. DRUIDS.

THE next day found us in Loch Bernera in Lewis. But it found us in a fog, and in a fog so thick, that, for two days, we could not see the bowsprit end. Yet there are advantages to be extracted, even out of a fog, by him who has studied that chemistry which separates the scattered atoms of good that are concealed under the mountains of human evil; and it is mainly owing to the darkness of this one, that you are indebted for so luminous an account of St. Kilda. Half a dozen bright days of occupation would have erased the half of these records of the brain: and thus it is that we learn, like the ducks, to rejoice even in the rains that imprison us to our narrow cabins on board, and to our smoky cabins on shore.

This inland sea is crowded with islands, among which, the great Bernera is six miles long; but many of them are very small. While the shores are deeply indented by bays and promontories, the water is so beset with these islands, that it requires no small effort of attention and care to navigate it. With plenty of time to spare, this navigation is very entertaining; the pleasure may not unaptly be compared to that of discovering ænigmas; from the exertion of ingenuity which it requires. But there is nothing picturesque, as the cliffs are without beauty and there is an utter want of wood. From the violent contrasts of red, white, and black, the rocks look like marbled paper; as if Nature had here sported in painting her own works, for the entertainment of some haberdasher in taste: an effect produced by the contor-

tions of the red and white granite, and gneiss, and of the black hornblende of which they are formed. My seamen were soon obliged to resign the pilotage, as beyond their powers; and the task of course devolved on my hand. Impudence is a very useful virtue, as my Lord Bacon avers, and as I had experienced in more places than Loch Eribol; acquiring by it, from my Captain and his crew both, a confidence that gave me access to a thousand places which I must otherwise have been content to abandon. Surprising as it may appear, there was not a pilot to be found in Scotland who was acquainted with one tenth part of the western coast. Of course, every step was, at first, a step of fear and difficulty, of doubt and remonstrance; and I soon foresaw that our expedition would shortly come to a close for want of a little courage. Mackenzie's chart did something; and a few fortunate conjectures about headlands and islands, with one or two successful anchorages at the outset, soon raised me to the rank of pilot for the Western Islands; not more surprised at the metamorphosis, than my betters have sometimes been at their sudden transformation into bishops, generals, and secretaries of state.

I may venture to say this, because it implies no boasting; since, according to the Phrenologists, it was the bump and not the man, which did the business. The same bump which, as I remarked in the last letter, teaches the gannet to find his way through the fog to his sprawling infants in St. Kilda, which guided the Royal Crummie from St. James's to Holyrood House, which directs the annual swallow from Egypt to the cottage eaves of his remote birth, which causes the benighted traveller to throw the reins on the neck of his unerring steed, which is the compass of the stork and the pole star of the faithful pigeon, that bump is also the organ of pilotage. By that the Indian traverses the vast expanse

of Lake Superior, when neither sun nor moon nor star exists to lead him on his way. By this, when entangled in the midnight forest, he finds his path "straight as De Moivre without rule or line;" as the spider himself, influenced by a rival bump, "designs his parallels." Thus also, doubtless, did the Vikingr traverse the stormy seas of the North, as Phenicia and Greece and Carthage had done before them; astonishing those who seem to have forgotten that the same deeds are performed at this day, and who have consequently written nonsense to prove that those ancient navigators never quitted the sight of land. And this, directed to other objects, is the coup d'œil of the soldier. For this Philopœmen was celebrated by Plutarch, for this have been celebrated the Saxes and the Marlboroughs and the Wellingtons. It is this which constitutes the geologist, which enables him to see within the earth, to seize with a glance the distribution and the nature of the rocks that are concealed from his corporeal eye. He who has this bump will never lose his road; and, whenever he pleases, he may take the helm into his own hand, and navigate Loch Bernera without a compass, and the Western Islands without a pilot.

It is very amusing to observe the various grounds on which reputation is founded in different societies; just as the orator of one circle is dumb in another. I imagine that my talent for starboard and larboard would be treated with as much contempt at the Royal Society or in a London assembly, as La Fleur's acquisitions in spatterdash making and in drum beating. Here, on the contrary, the anxious, and often perilous pursuit of stones and drawings and antiquities, was viewed with a proper and just mixture of wonder and contempt; but when the "Saxon philosopher" took the helm which the seamen had abandoned, or carried the vessel into an anchorage

which the Captain was afraid to look at, the scene became entirely changed. But to claim much is the surest way to gain much: high pretensions make submissive believers; and, such mechanical animals are the mass, that it only lay with me to wreck the vessel and drown the crew whenever I pleased; not a thought being entertained of disobeying orders, which I often trembled at giving.

There is no sort of knowledge to be despised, however foreign to our usual pursuits, however small the quantity we are able to attain. "Can do, is easily carried about," says a Scottish proverb; and though the stores with which our grandmothers, good souls, had crammed their garrets, with the expectation that they would be "of use some day," prove rather incommodious to the heirs who cannot discover their uses, fortunately, the garret of our brains has got a nook and a drawer for every thing; while, reversing the property of Fortunatus's purse, the more we put into it the more it is capable of holding. Doubtless, even La Fleur made the better servant for his talents of drum beating and spatterdash making. He might have made, I doubt not, the better physician also. Assuredly none of us have ever foreseen that our juvenile pranks in boats, and a little superaddition of geology, might, with a little management, eventually procure us the credit of seamanship, and thus gain us the command over a pig-headed captain, and enable us to acquire the confidence of his crew. And, for a better reason than the Turkish one, were I to begin the world again, and if the world promised to last long enough, I would learn to balance a ladder on my nose like Signor Bologna, to preach a fanatical sermon like Huntington, to dance a minuet like Vestris, and to eat fire like Katterfelto. Swift, moreover, is wrong when he will not allow the tailors of Laputa to

succeed in making a pair of breeches. Unquestionably Sir Isaac Newton would have made a better fisherman than Isaac Walton, and Alexander the Great would, in a week, have rivalled Alexander the coppersmith in the manufacture of a brass pan. But this is another argument, which, bidding fair to carry us off the course, I shall only appeal to the Author of Waverley to confirm the preceding one by his own experience.

At the foot of this inlet is that work mentioned by Martin, which, like all similar structures elsewhere, is attributed to the Druids, who are always at hand to father every thing which claims no other owner. The general aspect of this structure, is that of a cross, nearly of the proportions of the Roman crucifix, with a circle at the intersection. But a nearer inspection discovers more than is essential to that form. The longest line lies in a direction of about 24° west of the true meridian, or pretty nearly in that of the magnetic variation at present, which is therefore the general bearing of the work. Erect stones, intermixed with some that have fallen, and with blank spaces whence they may have been removed, or where, more probably, they are covered by the soil, are found along this line for the space of 588 feet, including the circle; their number amounting to fourteen, and eleven of them being still erect. If we were allowed to fill up the blanks according to the general proportions of the intervals between those that remain, the number would be twenty within that distance. But following the direction of this line further on, there are indications of other stones, all of them fallen, and nearly covered by earth and vegetation, that would justify us in extending it 90 feet or more further; thus making the total length about 680 feet. Parallel to the long leg of the cross, and to that only, is another line, now far less perfect than the first; since it contains only three erect and seven fallen

stones, and reaches, as far as I could discover, only to 480 feet. Thus these two lines may be conceived to form a sort of avenue to the circular enclosure; its breadth being exactly equal to a semi-diameter of the circle, as the additional line touches the edge of this. The shorter line of the cross, at right angles to the other, now measures 204 feet, including the circle: but as it is longer on one side than on the other, its original length has probably been greater, though I was unable to detect any traces of fallen stones; the progress of some enclosures having here interfered with the integrity of the work. This line contains ten erect stones. The diameter of the circle is 63 feet from north to south, and 62 from east to west, and it contains fourteen erect stones in the circumference, with one in the centre. This central stone is twelve feet high; one near the end of the long line measures thirteen, a few are found reaching to seven or eight, but the height of the greater number does not exceed four. The intervals between the stones vary from two to ten yards; but the longer ones are probably the consequence of the loss of those which once occupied these places. I ought to add that the total number of stones which I could discover, either erect or recently fallen, is forty-eight; and that if the whole work were completed, as it appears originally to have been built, they would amount to sixty-five or sixty-six. The name of this place is Classernish, but the work itself is called, by the people, Fidvreachie. There are other circles of the more ordinary construction in the same immediate neighbourhood; but these do not require description. I may only remark that some of them are about fifty feet in diameter, and that one contains in the centre, four stones, forming a square, as noticed in speaking of Arran.

The aspect of the large work is very striking, as well from its extent and form, as from the position which it

occupies on a gentle eminence, in an open tract of moor land, where there is nothing to divert the attention. It appears to have been surrounded at a small distance by a trench or ditch, which is now, in many parts, obscure; and the same circumstance occurs in the great circle of Stenhouse in Orkney, as well as at Stonehenge. These three specimens are indeed the most remarkable of those structures in Britain; that of Stenhouse being a hundred yards in diameter: and the present, from its singularity of form as well as its extent, may be allowed to claim the second place in rank. Though this circle was known to Martin, his description is of no value, nor does he offer any speculations about it that are worth notice. Not so, however, is Toland's account; which is an admirable specimen of that exaggeration and disregard of truth, which are too often the ingredients of every dealer in hypotheses, but which figure very well amid the heap of idle declamation, loose conjectures, and wild hints of unperformed projects, which he chooses to call an Essay on the Druids. It is not easy to discover, from his description, whether he had seen it, or whether he had drawn up his account from information: it is of little consequence. He says that every stone was placed in the circle in such a manner, that there were twelve equidistant obelisks, six feet asunder, and each seven feet high, representing the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The central stone, he adds, is thirteen feet high, resembling the rudder of a ship; while there are four obelisks directly south, in a straight line, and the same number east and west; whence it was round and winged. But I need not repeat the remainder of his description, which is all equally false or fanciful, except to remark that he chooses to find nineteen stones in each line of the avenue, "betokening," as he says, "the cycle of nineteen years." He concludes, with the same accuracy as he has discovered

that the fourteen stones of the circle represent the twelve signs of the Zodiac, that "the temple stands astronomically," "denoting also the four principal winds, subdivided each into four others;" which is a pure fiction. And hence he says, "I can prove it to have been dedicated, principally to the sun, but subordinately to the seasons and elements, particularly to the sea and winds, as appears by the rudder in the middle." The rudder is as imaginary as all the rest: it is a rude and shapeless mass.

From such descriptions and such perversions of facts and history, has Toland constructed a book that has not wanted its admirers, though it does not contain one fact, nor one rational conjecture, nor one fair inference. He sees Druidical works in every stone cairn, in the common forts of the Danes and Britons, and in monuments and works of obviously modern date, and even of Roman origin. Irish fables, forced etymologies, and scraps of misunderstood and perverted quotation, which have not even the merit of showing good and solid reading, complete the heterogeneous mass. Borlase, and even Keysler, are perfect sobriety compared to this dreaming visionary. And yet he is quoted as authority for this very temple, as for much more. In a similar manner, another of these, "learned antiquaries," quoting Wallace and others, matches the dwarfy stone of Hoy, a fragment, which, comparatively speaking, a horse might draw, with a hole which a rabbit could scarcely litter in, against the house of Amasis, which astonished Herodotus more than any thing he saw in Egypt; having been cut out of one stone, and requiring the hard labour of three years, and of two thousand seamen, to be removed from Elephantis to Sais.

But the temple of the Hyperborean Apollo deserves a few words more, since the much more reasonable Dr. Smith has chosen to follow the Irish antiquary and others, in this fantastical hypothesis respecting the winged tem-

ple described by Eratosthenes. Toland's views of ancient, or former, geography, will perhaps startle a modern geologist, when he determines that the Hyperborean island from which the "Druid Abaris" came, consisted of Sky, Lewis, and Uist, united into one. It would be as well if he would show how and when they were separated, without being heard, as well as heard of, by the successors of Abaris and Pythagoras. The history of Abaris deserves to be hunted down a little further than either Toland or Smith have pursued it. That he was a Druid Priest in a Highland dress, is proved by the Orator Himerius, though Suidas says he was a Scythian. Yet Scot and Scythian being the same thing, he is still a native of Lewis; though he was the forerunner of his countryman Anacharsis, who is of a very different country, and the son of King Scuta, who never existed. Toland has forgotten this; or, more probably, he had not read Iamblicus and Diodorus; else he would not have left his tale half told. It is not difficult to beat him at his own trade. The latter personage quotes Hecatæus as his authority; and the proof that Lewis must be the island, is, that the "Hyperborean island" is highly fruitful and pleasant, producing two crops in a year; as Lord Scaforth and his successors have, doubtless, experienced. From him also we learn that Lewis, since it is Lewis, was dedicated to Apollo, and that the God paid his priests a visit every fourteen years, when they amused him by showing him the rocks and mountains of the moon;—through a telescope. Dutens has overlooked this important passage. Unluckily, antiquaries differ upon the geography of the island; and Rowlands has clearly proved that Anglesea, and not Lewis, was the Hyperborean isle, and that Abaris is corrupted by Hecatæus or Diodorus from Apreece. So that he was a Welshman, and not a Highlander. I know not how our Highland friends will submit to be thus robbed of their great Druid.

It is unlucky also that the antiquaries cannot agree whether the winged temple of the Hyperborean or Highland Apollo was winged with lines of stone or built of the wings of birds. If the latter be true, it is probable that St. Kilda was the island, after all; as the streets are still paved with gannet's wings. But this again does not agree with the opinions of Herodotus, Pliny, Pindar, Callimachus, and Apollonius Rhodius; awkward rivals of Rowlands and Toland, since they determine that the island in debate was situated under the pole, and beyond the north wind. Hence it was that this island was so excellent; as Mr. Scoresby and Guthrie have proved that there can be only south winds at that delicious spot, and as the south wind is proverbially hot. Hence also it must have been, that Abaris and his Hyperboreans only died when they chose; as it was the land of immortality, as well as of double crops and perpetual summer. But then again Strabo and Pomponius Mela and others, have discovered that this marvellous island, which is Paradise itself, lies somewhere about the sources of the Wolga, or else in the Euxine; while Olaus Rudbeck is certain that it is one of the islands in the Baltic, where it is well known that the north wind never blows. That learned man would have been better employed in dissecting his lymphatics, than in proving that Stockholm was Eden, and Sweden the Officina Gentium; that unlucky term which has produced as much nonsense as any term that ever was invented; as is well known to many more than Hume, Wallace, and Malthus. Here also Toland is out of his reading and depth again; for he says that the central stone of the Winged Temple is a rudder; whereas these learned ancients agree that it was the very God himself. His statue was a single rude stone among the Hyperboreans.

In consequence of the great fertility of Lewis it must

have been, that the people sent their first fruits to Delphi. It seems a question, however, whether these were pine apples or oatcakes. Pausanias thinks they passed them from hand to hand, beginning with the Arimaspians. Which is very probable, as the distance from Lewis to Arimaspia is so trifling. Then, in return, says Iamblicus, Abaris carried back with him from Greece, gold, which he stored up in his Winged Temple. Herodotus, indeed, talks of the fable of Abaris; which, for Herodotus, is somewhat strong language, considering that he was not particularly nice on these points. But possibly he only meant the golden arrow, which this Mr. Apreece had received from Apollo, upon which he rode round the globe and paid a visit to Pythagoras, for the purpose of examining his golden thigh; which event happening in the reign of King Phalaris, because they disputed on metaphysics at his court, the age of Phalaris and his bull is thus determined to have been in the third, or else in the fifty-fourth, Olympiad. In return for his magical arrow, Pythagoras taught him the virtues of the number seven. It is a pity that we have lost these, as they must have been beyond all price. If it be true also that, as Servius says, Virgil borrowed from Homer, and Homer from Orpheus, the prophecy which moves Æneas, then Lewis has also been honoured by the visit of this great man and radical reformer, since he derived all his learning from the Oracle of the Hyperborean Apollo.

"Et voila," again, "comme on ecrit"—antiquities as every thing else. And this is profound antiquarian research and learning. It is only to put it into a somewhat less questionable shape, and I too might take my degree, Abaris himself only knows how high, among the Pezrons and the Rudbecks and the rest of those whose pursuit it is, deeply to darken us with knowledge. Thus have been written folios on Druids, and on Cabiri, and on

languages, and on etymologies; Œdipuses and Hermeses without end, riddles which would trouble Œdipus himself to solve, and which Thoth, Trismegistus, Teut, Tat, Hermes, Mercury, Ermenseil, or by whatever name he is known, would be puzzled to comprehend the drift and object of. Thus have the histories of Jupiter, and Saturn, and Peleg, and the Titans, and Japhet, and the Cimmerians, and a hundred others, been written; and this is learning. Horace Walpole compares antiquaries to old women: a very irreverend remark.

But lest you should rank me among the sisterhood, we will return to some matters of fact connected with this remarkable Circle.

As far as my antiquarian reading goes, the cruciform disposition is peculiar to this one. In the smaller monuments indeed, of which so many distinct kinds are included under the vague term of Cromlechs, a disposition of the stones in a form somewhat resembling that of a cross, has occasionally been observed; but in most of them, perhaps, it seems to have been the result either of accident or necessity. It is generally understood also that it was not till after the time of Constantine, or the vision of the Labarum, that the Cross became a general object of veneration. Yet it seems unquestionable that the figure of a cross was known to the Gothic nations, and also used by them, before they were converted to Christianity. As they seem to have borrowed other hieroglyphic emblems from the east, so this seems to have been among the figures which they might have obtained in the same manner, and have also used in their monuments, without its being necessary to suppose that they adopted it as Christians, or after they had become such. We need not now dive into that mysticism which supposes that the Egyptians used this emblem as typical or prophetic. Dr. Young has shewn that the Crux ansata,

so often discussed, is the emblem or hieroglyphic of Life, and has rendered it probable that the simpler figure means Protector or Saviour. In the Gothic sculptures, it must also be remarked, that the figure of the cross is supposed to represent the Runic Hammer of Thor, or the Thunder of the Scandinavian Jove. In this case, it is plain that it could not have been derived from our religion; and there is no reason for supposing that the popular opinion which refers its use to the consequence of the much-discussed vision of Constantine, is true. I shall have occasion to shew hereafter, that the Scandinavians derived other emblems from the east, through their Gothic progenitors.

It is not an uncommon error to attribute to modern times, and to the consequences of the Christian religion, forms and usages which are of a higher antiquity than itself, and which the Christians themselves borrowed or imitated from those more ancient nations whence these have also descended to their savage and yet unconverted offspring, apart from the progress of Christian usages. Thus the incense and the holy water of the Catholics have not necessarily given rise to the lustrations by fire and by water which we find among the early and half barbarous nations of Europe, and the relics of which are still to be traced among the modern superstitions of the people. The beads used in prayer, are also Tartarian and Indian; and, if they became a Mahometan usage, so did they, in a similar manner, become a fashion of the Catholic church. But whence ever the Norwegians borrowed the use of the Cross, it seems to have prevailed more among them than among the other nations of the north. It was an object of great veneration in the ninth century, and was frequently marked on their offensive arms and shields; as it was combined with their older monuments, and carved on those which they erected

within the periods in which they became inhabitants of Britain, and of which the evidence remains in their sculptured stones. Thus also, where it has been found on monuments of decidedly higher antiquity than the introduction of Christianity among them, it may sometimes, instead of being an ancient usage, have arisen from their desire of converting these to their new worship; although that combination has also been attributed to their reluctance to part entirely with their former and hereditary monuments and superstitions. This at least is the opinion of Procopius, as it is of Gregory Nazianzen; and it is well known that the effect of that opinion was to lead to councils and anathemas against the practice. Hence also seem to have originated the chapels and subterraneous crypts in form of crosses, which bear the marks of a distant Norwegian antiquity. One of these has been described at New Grange, in Ireland, and they have also been found in Jutland.

If the subterranean crypt of this nature is held to be necessarily Norwegian, it may assist in proving that this circle is a Norwegian or Danish work; because there is one in this very spot, as there are some in Cornwall, connected with circles and cromlechs, apparently of the same origin. Whatever may be judged of that opinion, and though the figure of the cross is here an apparently essential part of the building, it is far from impossible that it may have been superadded to the original simple circle. It is equally probable, however, that the whole work is not of higher antiquity than the ninth or tenth centuries, when the Danes and Norwegians had occupied the Western islands, and when they had received the Christian religion; and that, as its date is similar to that of the sculptured stones which so generally bear the figure of the cross, so its figure may be explained on the same principles.

Putting aside the rhapsodies of the Druids at present, as I have dismissed Abaris and Apollo, it is not a monument which could well be referred to a high antiquity, on account of the feebleness of its construction. The stones are not deeply rooted in the ground: and many more, if not the whole, must have fallen, like the rest, had its date been so remote. That they have fallen, and not been taken down for economical purposes, seems clear; as even the fallen stones have not been removed: while we know that the reverence which the Highlanders paid to these ancient monuments, prevents them now from destroying, out of wantonness, that which they have been accustomed, in former days, to respect.

Some philosopher of the Druidical fraternity, who is inclined to go to Egypt or the East, for this work, may here find a new argument in its magnetic bearing, and prove that this instrument was used in its erection before it was known to our navigators. If he disclaims Toland and his rudder, or does not choose to admit that there are fourteen signs in the Zodiac, he may still shew how the central stone of the circle represented the sun, if the Druids were Copernicans, and the circle itself the planets: a slight error having only been made in their numbers: or, if they followed Ptolemy, he may place the earth in the middle. Then the long line of the cross will represent the axis of the earth, or the chief meridian, and the short one will be the ecliptic or the equinoctial, and so forth. Such a theory has in fact, been proposed, on account of the present magnetic bearings of this structure. Dr. Stukeley, who is the troublesome parent of Druid temples, and the principal hero of Stonehenge, thinks that celebrated work was erected by the magnetic wisdom of the Druids, because the variation of its meridian is six degrees east. It is certain that we do not know during what period the Druids might have

gone on erecting temples in this country; nor have we any theory by which we can determine the variation for past times, as we can determine eclipses. But as, in these two cases, the range amounts to nearly thirty degrees, a change not to be made within the lapse of a small period, it is much more likely that the deviation from the true meridian is, in both, the result of accident. Had the magnet been known to the Druids, among their other remnants of eastern philosophy, it is absolutely impossible but that its polarity should, among maritime and piratical nations, have been applied to the purposes of navigation.

Quarto volumes on Druidism, aye, and on many other things, have nevertheless been written on smaller foundations than this. It is because there is nothing in them, that they are so gigantic: for never have books been so black, so thick, so large, and so long, as when they have been written about nothings. Bacon expresses his wonder why those who travel by sea should give us many, and long, and large books, when they have little else to narrate but the contents of the log book; whereas those who travel by land and see much, are content to make few books and short ones. The reason is plain enough: as in the case of antiquarian discussions, it is the property of the lighter matters, like air, to distend themselves exactly in the inverse ratio of the quantity or force of the solid materials by which they are restrained. Thus the soap bubble dilates its brilliant and gaudy skin to an imposing magnitude; but, at the first rude touch it betrays its origin from an om of dirty water.

But the advocate for the Druids ask, if this was not a Druidical temple what was it. We may ask in return, whether it is a case of dilemma between that and nothing: it will not be one whit the more Druidical should it be impossible to prove it something else. It does

not follow that it has either been a temple or a Druidical structure. It is not necessary that any of these structures should have been temples; we may therefore ask if it is probable. Here, for example, are five or six temples, if they are to be such, accumulated in a barren country which could never have contained worshippers enough to occupy or employ one. Some of the antiquaries in this field say that the Druidical worship was monolithic: I need not explain further this allusion. The allusion and the theory both may, indeed, be titillating to the imaginations of those who delight in obscurity, and in somewhat more. Granting that it might be admitted with respect to the Maypole, the actual use and object of the central stone of the circle is proved, as I shall presently show; while there is not the slightest evidence to indicate, either that the Druids worshipped in stone circles, or that they had copied or preserved, presuming on their Oriental tenets and descent, the peculiar worship in question. Besides, here, and elsewhere, there are Circles without a central stone: a fact not to be reconciled to any theory of this nature. The variety in the disposition of these ancient structures is endless; as is evident in examining the specimen now under review, that of Stonehenge, the great circle of Stenhouse, the extraordinary specimen found in Jersey, and numerous others that might be named; a variety not very consistent with what we should imagine of the temples of an ancient priesthood, united by an absolute community of origin, rites, and usages. Near Brownwilly in Cornwall, the moors are covered with these circular structures, of all sizes; and there is no possibility that so many places of worship should have been accumulated in a territory that must always have been thinly peopled, and in the most barren spot of that barren district. That these churches should be disposed in such a manner,

and in such remote and extraordinary places, is an hypothesis only fit for such visionaries as Borlase and Toland.

I have already had occasion to speak of the Circles when speaking of Arran; but it is a subject which demands a more detailed investigation. I know not precisely to whom we are indebted for the notable discovery that they were Druidical. But it is not very ancient, and it has not, therefore, the support of antiquity. Dr. Stukeley is the most active advocate for the Druidical origin of Stonehenge, and probably the progenitor. Dr. Charlton maintained it was Danish; and Inigo Jones, who seems to have forgotten his architectural and historical reading when on this subject, assigned it to the Romans. As to Scotland, the merit of the hypothesis seems to totter between Sibbald and Toland; a well-mated pair of antiquaries. By such authorities and opinions as these, do nations submit to be led blindfold for generations: so much easier is it to follow than to take the trouble of inquiring. The hypothesis is a pure dream. Not only it has not the slightest vestige of historical evidence to support it, but it is at utter variance with the only evidence we have respecting the Druids. On the other hand, the historical evidence for the Scandinavian origin of the Circles, is full, pointed, and plain; and it is confirmed by every collateral circumstance which the case can possibly furnish. Is it any wonder that antiquaries are the standing jest of literature and of farce alike. Did they content themselves with trifling about a brass farthing or a Roman tile, the amusement is as innocent as impaling butterflies or collecting venerable rubbish; but when they lay their feeble brains together to pervert history, it is time to impale them, and to pin them down in drawers for the contemplation of posterity. Even natural objects cannot escape the delirium of their

distorted vision, when Borlase finds sacrificing basons in the water-worn cavities of granite, and idols in the cairns and rocking stones; and when Toland pronounces that the columnar iron stone of Orkney is a Druidical pavement. Cairns, barrows, obelisks, circles, dunes, subterranean crypts and dwellings, all, every thing, is Druidical.

It will not be very difficult to show that nearly all the Circles with which we are acquainted, generically speaking, are of Scandinavian or Saxon origin, or of a Gothic parentage; and that, as far as they occur in our own country, they are of a later date than the æra of the Druids. Their uses and application are, at the same time, various. They have been temples, courts of convention and justice, courts for spectacles, or theatres, and funereal monuments; and some have unquestionably been fortifications or defences, while others have every appearance of having been sheep-folds and dwelling-houses.

So far from its being known that the Druids worshipped in stone circles or temples, it is pointedly said, that they performed their religious ceremonies in groves. If any modern evidence asserts the contrary, it is from the fact that these writers have confounded together the religion of the Celts and that of the Scandinavians; as has happened even respecting some of the ancients, who were unable to distinguish the separate characteristics of the two people, after they had become mixed in the progress of the Gothic conquests; a fact fully proved by their own writings. Now, on the contrary, it is on record that the Scandinavian nations did worship in circular open temples of stone. In the Eyrbiggia Saga, the temple of Thor is described as a circular range of upright stones, containing a central stone called the stone of Thor, where the sacrifices, or the executions, were performed. I need not quote more testimonies, either from Wormius or

others, to this purpose, as the evidence is as distinct as it is pointed; though I may remark that, from its style and magnitude, it is not unlikely that the temple of this Lewis Apollo was in reality a temple, and possibly that of Thor himself. The religion of Scandinavia, as is well known, was not Druidism, though some of the usages and doctrines have been confounded, partly in consequence of the remote Asiatic origin of both nations, but more from posterior intermixture of the conquerors and the conquered, and by the mistakes of these writers who had not appreciated the distinction. But the followers of Odin, like the Druids, thought it offensive to the deities to confine them in buildings; and hence their temples were open inclosures, while, in some cases, the altar was erected on a plain. It was not till after the introduction of Christianity, that real temples or buildings were adopted.

Now as to the uses of the Circles for the purpose of theatres, that also rests on the authority of Wormius, who is simply and plainly narrating the history and usages of his country, from documents and monuments that were before his eyes. They were used for the tournaments of the day, or for celebrating the games which were in vogue among those people. It is probable that the largest circles were appropriated to this use; though some of these, from their peculiarity of position as commanding eminences, seem to have been fortifications or garrisons.

The most numerous, however, those at least which are to us the most remarkable, from containing a central stone generally within a circle of twelve, seem to have been courts of justice and election. Such works are now found in the countries of ancient Scandinavia, where they are universally received by the people themselves to have been Tings, or courts of meeting and of justice. They abound,

among other tracts, in Holstein. The legal or judicial proceedings were sometimes attended by sacrifices, or executions; and thus the presence of instruments used for this purpose, and of the marks of fire occasionally found in these buildings, is explained. These have been wrested into Druidical sacrifices and Druidical implements. It is matter of historical record that Thorder Galler erected such a circle for a Law Ting: and, on this subject, the testimony of Olaus Wormius, Saxo Grammaticus, Krantz, and others, is uniform and decided. It is equally known, and equally shown by the same authors, that they were made use of for the purpose of elections, in that country, in ancient times. Three of these still remain; one near to Lunden in Scania, one at Leyra in Zealand, and one near Niburg or Wilbord in Jutland. These consisted, "ut plurimum," of twelve stones in a circle, with a central one; the former serving, among other purposes, as a barrier against the assembled crowd, and the latter being the place of the king. Councils were also held at them, and if a king died at a distance from his home or people, a fresh circle was formed for the election of his successor. The central stone was called the Kongstolen; a fact which demolishes the whole monolithic theory, and reflects no great honour on the learning of the antiquaries who have supported it. As the number of Lagmen, electors, councillors, or under whatever name they may be called, from whence we have remotely derived our own jury, consisted of twelve, the cause of this number of stones in the circumference is also explained; each councillor or elector standing at his own stone to give his opinion or vote. The King, being elected or approved, received their homage also, at his own Kongstolen.

Thus a third and a fourth use for the circles are proved; and the name Thingvalla, applied to them in

Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, is equally familiar to ourselves; though sometimes applied to mounds as well as to circles: occurring in the Tynewald hill of Mann, the Tingwall of Shetland, and probably also in the Dingwall of Rossshire. The argument does not, therefore, rest on the testimony of the Scandinavians alone, but is amply supported by proofs from our own country. In Wales, these circles are called Cylch Cyngrair, or the Circles of Congress; an appellation which seems quite satisfactory respecting their analogous uses in this part of Britain, and, by parity of reason, in the whole of our island. But we are not even driven to analogical reasoning here; since it is equally matter of acknowledged tradition, that the Highland and Insular Chiefs were elected in similar circles, and that the central stone was the Kongstolen of the Highland Regulus, as of the Norwegian King. This fact is too familiar to admit of a doubt. Nothing but the blind fury of hypothesis could oppose proofs so positive. Against them there is nothing to offer but a term which is not a century old, and which was the invention of modern and visionary antiquaries. The Druid hypothesis wars against all testimony, and is not only unsupported by the slightest shadow of proof, but divested of all probability. The original inventor who threw out this bait, may, however, pride himself in its having succeeded wonderfully.

I remarked formerly, in speaking of Arran, that it was probable some of the Circles were purely monumental, and then referred to the specimen at this place, which contains within it four stones disposed in a square. I need not repeat what was there urged; but may add, for the purpose of completing my own theory of the Circles, that the testimony of Olaus Wormius is also equally pointed on this subject. A single circle of stones surrounding a cairn, indicated, as he says, a Chief. In

this case also there was a central stone, used for the purpose of sacrifices. That the square of stones within the circle, here in Lewis, covers a body, there is little doubt; and, to confirm this use still further, bodies have frequently been found within these Circles in Ireland. In Scilly also, and on the testimony of Borlase, who is not easily persuaded to give up any part of his hypothesis, barrows covering bodies have been found within Circles.

He also confirms the opinion which I formerly suggested, that the Cromlechs were not altars but monuments. As this subject is connected with the Circles, it is scarcely a digression to notice it, and thus to complete the history of all these pseudo-druidical monuments. This practice of erecting cromlechs was also Scandinavian, and the evidence is so distinct and positive as not to admit of a question. It is ordered by a Norwegian decree, that such "hanging stones," as they are called, shall be erected over the bodies of heroes; and Saxo Grammaticus further records, that Regner erected such a monument, "saxis superne locatis," on account of his victory over the Finns. Thus, however, it appears, that the transom stones, or cromlechs, may have been monuments to victory as well as funereal ones; and it is not unlikely that this offers the true solution of the history of the disputed Stonehenge.

It is still important also to remark, that as the remembrance of the uses of the Circles has been preserved in ancient Scandinavia, so the works themselves seem to be most abundant in the countries which this people possessed; although not absolutely limited to them. That there should be an occasional community of usage in such a point as this, between the Celtic and Gothic people, is no more extraordinary than that they should resemble each other in so many other particulars. But

while we can, in this way, easily account for their presence, almost wherever they exist, we are unable to account for them in the same manner on the Druidical hypothesis. As far as we know of the Druids, we have reason to believe that they were very limited in place, in Britain. There is no proof that they governed or existed in Scotland, though that may have been the fact; and far less any reason for thinking that they were spread over ancient Scandinavia. On the contrary, we are perfectly informed respecting the religion of this nation, and know that it was not Druidism. It must therefore follow, that the circular structures of Scandinavia were not, in any case, Druidical; unless we choose to imagine a more ancient order of Druids in that country; a fact of which there is no shadow of proof. It is also curious, and somewhat important, to remark, when on this question, that the Highland traditions and opinions do not attribute the Circles to the Druids. In fact, the common people appear to have no theory or tradition at all respecting this priesthood, except where they have borrowed it recently from their betters. It is the educated among them to whom we must look for all these theories; and, in them, it has been derived from the writings of modern antiquaries. The most common opinion of the people respecting these works is, that they were Roman, and were either temples or courts of justice. Excepting that they are thus referred to the wrong people, this traditionary opinion coincides sufficiently with the one I am attempting to establish.

It has been a leading error with these antiquaries, to find a common use for things that have had many uses. The most conspicuous and important of these have now been described, and it only remains to notice those to which none of these assigned uses seem to be applicable. I mentioned the crowds of circular buildings which are

still found in one of the wildest parts of Cornwall. These are often so small as not to exceed ten or twelve feet in diameter; consisting, like the others, of separate and large stones. It is possible that these may be monuments, and the place the scene of some action. But it is equally likely that they have been folds for cattle or sheep when the wolf was an inhabitant of this country; or they may have been dwelling houses, since the circular method of building these, seems to have been nearly universal among rude nations. It is easy to conceive how the interstitial and smaller stones had fallen and disappeared, while the larger ones remained; and this view may possibly be applicable to many more cases to which the usual fanciful origin has been attributed. The same district presents numerous examples of circles of enormous diameter, yet differing from the ordinary circular forts, as being of a much slighter construction. The position of these would seem to indicate that they had been posts or defences; but it is scarcely necessary to dwell on so obvious an application, and one which will probably be found to apply to many of these hitherto mysterious structures.

Thus I must conclude that, as far as the Circles are concerned, I have knocked down the Druidical system and established my own. I should be wanting in the most essential quality of an antiquary and a system maker, if I could not say as Madame la Duchesse de Ferté said to Madame de Stael, "il n'y a que moi au monde qui aie toujours raison."

But there is much more in the prevailing belief about the Druids themselves, as visionary as their temples. That they were magicians, however, is indubitable; when they have contrived to cast the "glamour" of their magic over the eyes and minds of sensible men for a period of so many centuries since they have all been laid in the Red Sea. The very sound of the word has in it a

creative magic that engenders a volume out of nothing; as the grey vapour which steams from the copper chest, dilates and solidifies itself into a huge giant. Little did they think, good easy men, into what monsters their eggs were to be hatched after their death; what Frickiuses, and Keyslers, and Tolands, and Borlases, and Vallanceys, and Smiths, and Ushers, and Campbells, and Huddlestones, and Stukelys, were to be spawned in future times, themselves destined to vivify the casual hints of antiquity into an universal system, unknown probably to the Arch Druid Chyndonax, or to Attius Patera Pater, himself.

Wherever Druidism originated, whether before the Deluge, as some of the learned think, or in the plain of Shinar, after it, as others equally learned suppose, the fundamental principle has undergone considerable revolutions since first it was introduced into Britain by Samothes the son of Japhet. The astrology of Magus and his followers is no more. Their magic, like Mesmerism, is dead, forgotten. The schools of the Saronides are extinct. The theology, the philosophy, and the astronomy of Druiyus are vanished into thin air. The oak has ceased to grow, the misletoe has fled with it, and the sacred breed of thrushes which the Druids cultivated for its propagation, has been roasted or made into puddings. Bardus and his followers have forgotten their songs, "Cold is Cadwallo's tongue," and so is "proud Llewellyn's lay;" the harp is unstrung, and the sacred groves and rocky steeps mourn their absent echoes. And as Druidism yielded to Osiris, and as the idolatries of Albin and Brute were succeeded by the preaching of St. Paul and Joseph of Arimathea and the exertions of Claudia Rufina, so the pious labours of Pudentiana, Praxides, and Novatus, gave way to the edict of Antoninus, the baptism of Lucius, and the holy toils of Eleutherus. Augustina, Palladius, Fastidius, and their followers, were

obliged in their turn to yield to Luther, Calvin, Knox, Cant, and Clavers, and now—what is to follow next.

Not a quarto volume, as such a commencement might promise, be assured. Yet as, in attempting to square these unlucky circles, you may think that I have spoken irreverently of so many learned men, I am, in honour bound to inquire what it is that we really do know about the Druids and Druidism. To attempt to extract and condense the essence and matter of twenty times as many volumes as my entire undertaking, into half a dozen of its pages, is a bold piece of literary chemistry. But it is only to dip into the same wells, and to try if we cannot reproduce, in a solid form, the elementary matter which has thus been gasified into so monstrous a bulk. It is to Cæsar chiefly that we must look for the little of decided information which we possess on this subject. If he did not speak from absolute personal knowledge, yet his information seems to have been derived more immediately from real authorities, than that of the few other classical writers who have noticed this priesthood. These are, principally, Pliny, Lucan, Valerius Maximus, Pomponius Mela, Diogenes Laertius, Ausonius, Ammianus Marcellinus, Vopiscus, Elianus Lampridius, Suetonius, Tacitus, Diodorus, Strabo, Aurelius Victor, Seneca, and Ovid. With respect to most of these writers, their notices are commonly very slender and casual; and among them, Pliny, though the most full and particular, is merely the narrator of reports, like most of the rest. Yet from these slender materials it is that such a system has been erected; conjectures serving to fill the vacancies, and assertions being substituted for evidence.

In truth, there is little or no other evidence respecting the Druids, than that which is thus historical and classical. There is no modern evidence; because they had disappeared and were forgotten before modern

writers arose. There is no foundation for analogical reasoning, beyond that of the resemblance of their tenets to those of other ancient mythologies. Nor is there any evidence from modern remains. The evidence which has been brought forward is imaginary, because the monuments or objects on which it is founded have been gratuitously assigned to this order of priests. I have shown that this is the case with the cromlechs, the circles, and the cairns; and the same reasoning may be applied to the erect stones, the stone coffins, and the other relics which have been, on grounds equally conjectural, attributed to them. History does not inform us that they erected such works, nor does it describe any usages which should induce us to form that opinion. On the contrary, it excludes them. Nor is there any analogy or induction by which we might form such a conclusion. On the other hand, history does inform us that the Scandinavian or Gothic nations, who were not Druids, and who had another form of worship, did erect such works; and while it also informs us of the real purposes for which they were erected, these are confirmed by analogy and evidence of other kinds, which cannot leave a rational doubt behind.

Excluding this evidence, we must also exclude those natural productions which Borlase chiefly, and others following him, have chosen to imagine Druidical monuments. The Rock Basins, as they have been called, are natural excavations, in granite commonly, produced by the action of water. If a single drop of water contrives to make a lodgment on the surface of this rock, particularly in Cornwall, where its texture and nature subject it to this kind of decomposition, the result is the disintegration of the stone, which goes on, and necessarily in an equable or circular manner, till the cavity becomes considerable; while, from its smoothness and regularity,

it also puts on such an appearance as art might have produced. The cairn of granite, of which the Cheese-wring of the same county is so remarkable an example, is also natural, and the result of the peculiar mode in which this rock wastes and falls away; while, under peculiar circumstances, where the centre of gravity of a block chances to lie beneath a narrow centre of suspension, the rocking stone is the result. These have been called idols, images of Saturn, and what not; while even when Borlase and his followers grant that they are natural productions, they have produced no evidence that the Druids worshipped such idols, or used such stones for any of their religious ceremonies. Nor is there any record of their use of sacrificing basins; so that we have no right to assume it, for the purpose of completing a visionary system. When it is said, as it has been, in support of this, that the northern nations venerated rocks and large stones, this implies a want of knowledge in these subjects, and is the consequence of having confounded the usages and opinions of the followers of Odin with those of a prior and a different people. This has been the case, particularly, with most of the French writers; who without seeming to be in the least aware of the difference between the two systems and the two people, have attributed to the Druids and Celts what belonged to the Goths and their worship; thus introducing into the subject confusion, worse, if possible, than that which Mallet and Pelloutier, generally following Cluverius, produced in the history of these nations. I have already shown how Toland had imagined a columnar and natural rock to be a Druidical pavement, and need not notice the other fancies of the same kind which have prevailed among these visionary writers.

Having thus shown what the grounds of the historical evidence for the Druids are, and disposed of that physi-

cal and antiquarian evidence which is imaginary, I need only further remark on this subject, that where these writers ought to refer solely to the classical authors, who can be the only real evidence in this case, they quote each other as authority. It is vain for Borlase to quote Keysler and Stukely, who were as visionary as himself. They add nothing to the evidence; and the authority of the one is as good as that of the other. With greater folly is Toland referred to as an authority, when he has shown that he was incapable of seeing what was before his eyes, and has proved that a regard for truth was, with him, nothing in comparison to the imaginary necessity of supporting his system. Had these writers been content with the only real evidence which the case affords, instead of enlarging on each other's fancies, the whole matter of their endless volumes might have been condensed into a very small space indeed, and the question would long ago have come to a state of rest.

I must now attempt to give a very brief statement of all that we really do know of the Druids from the classical authorities; omitting however the greater part of the quotations and references, partly because they have been so often given to the world, and partly because the limits and nature of this sketch will not allow of such details.

I may commence with Cæsar's authority, as the chief; and that the Druids formed a religious order appears from the passage in which he says, "Druidæ divinis rebus intersunt, sacrificia publica et privata procurant, religiones interpretantur." From him also we learn that they exercised the powers of excommunication; "sacrificiis interdicunt." Should the patient however have died under excommunication, they seem to have acted with more liberality than St. Ernulphus, since they offered sacrifices for the benefit of his soul. The chief

priest was elective, possessing "summam auctoritatem" over the whole body. When he died, the next in "dignitate" succeeded; but if there were many competitors for this honour, it seems that the elections led to factions, and even to fighting: "de principatu armis contendunt." The same author says, that they worshipped Mercury chiefly, and "hunc omnium artium auctorem ferunt." With respect to their tenets, we learn from Valerius Maximus, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Lucan, that they believed in the immortality of the soul and in transmigration.

Respecting their mode of worship, we must have recourse to the less valuable authority of Pliny, Lucan, and Diodorus. The latter calls them Saronides; the priests of the oak groves. Lucan also speaks of their "nemora" and "luci"; and, when they were abolished, Suetonius Paulus cut down their groves. On this subject, Pliny is more full. He also speaks of their veneration for the oak; nihil robore sacratius;" and from him also we learn the regard which they paid to the "viscum," which is supposed to be our misletoe. Of this plant he says, that it was "rarum admodum inventu, et, repertum, magna religione petitur, et ante omnia sextâ lunâ." The priest was also dressed in a white robe on this occasion, and he cut it with a golden knife. It was held a remedy against all evils; whether from its magical or medicinal virtues, we are not told. The line of Ovid, in which he speaks of the viscum, is supposed by Keysler to be spurious. I may add to this account, that the Druids had annual meetings; but whether these were of a religious or a political nature, does not appear, as the Druids acted in both capacities. Pliny speaks of the "ovum anguinum" as if he had seen it; but as to that tale, and the glass beads, still called Druidical, and the respect paid to vervain, even could we know what the "verbena" of the ancients was, there is nothing worth repeating.

Such seems to be all that we can safely rely on respecting the religious institutions, usages, and tenets of the Druids; and it falls far short of the system which has been constructed out of it, in which its sectators appear to have left the efforts, even of geologists and physicians, in system-making, far behind. But that they also worshipped Apollo, or the sun, under some of his names, is inferred from the remains of superstitious usages of this kind in Cornwall, Ireland, and Scotland; and chiefly from the fires of the first of May and those of Midsummer. It is also said that the tomb of Chyndonax, the Arch Druid of Gaul, was found at Dijon in 1598; the inscription on a vase of glass, and in Greek, signifying that he lay interred in the wood of Mithra. Hence it has been concluded that this order had borrowed its tenets from Persia; as has also been inferred from other considerations.

Now though there is, in all this, no indication of temples or circles, and though it is universally believed that the Celts and Druids thought it inconsistent with the nature of the gods to enclose them in temples, Borlase attempts to prove that there were such temples within the groves. Not the slightest evidence, however, of this appears; as it is impossible to place any credit on a fable related by Strabo and Pomponius Mela, which, if it proved this, would prove somewhat more, and which is of equal credit with the voyage of Ulysses to Scotland, or the fable of Procopius respecting the Islands of the blessed. The story is that there was an island near Britain where nine virgin Druidesses lived; who, although they were virgins, were allowed husbands once a year. Their temple was built within a grove, and dedicated to Bacchus; and, once in a year, they pulled down the roof, raised storms, and transformed themselves into animals; at the same time tearing one out of their number limb

from limb. This may rank with the voyages of Sindbad; and if Keysler or Borlase are satisfied with the evidence which it affords, it can only be said that they are not very difficult to please.

The political powers and privileges of the Druids form the next point in their history which requires to be examined. Beginning with Cæsar, once more, we find that they were a judicial body. "De omnibus controversiis publicis privatisque constituunt"—"decernunt"—"præmia pœnasque constituunt." I need not add to this testimony; but may repeat, from the same authority, those political privileges which they were dexterous enough to combine with their religious and political powers. "Druidæ a bello abesse consueverunt, neque tributa una cum aliis pendunt: militiæ vacationem, omniumque rerum immunitatem habent." With this exemption from military service and taxation, they combined the education of youth. "Ad hos magnus adolescentium numerus disciplinæ causa concurrit, magnoque apud eos sunt honore."

With respect to the nature of their information, and of these studies, we are left very much to our own conjectures. It appears from Cæsar that they had a system of cosmogony, and studied some kind of astronomy, though the nature of these is not explained. They inquired however, "de mundi et terrarum magnitudine et rerum natura." They also paid attention to the properties of plants; probably pursuing that magical medicine which seems to have been the original medical science of all rude people. Pomponius Mela speaks in the same manner; and Pliny also notices their acquirements in magic and medicine. The system of education was operose; since Cæsar says it sometimes extended to twenty years, and that the pupils were obliged to learn a great number of verses by heart. It was also held un-

lawful to commit these doctrines to writing. Hence it has also been imagined that this priesthood drew its usages and tenets from the east, on account of the resemblance which this system of education possessed to that of Pythagoras, borrowed from the same source.

Whatever argument may be founded on that, or on aught else, respecting the Oriental dogmas and fashions of the Druids, it is probable that education was one of their profitable and valuable privileges, and that there is a simpler method of explaining the duration of a Druidical education. Other teachers than Druids have found it convenient to protract the period of instruction; and the making of verses is not one of the worst engines towards this end which has been discovered. Pythagoras, with all his attainments, understood the value of education, as he seems to have done that of much more quackery, as well as any Druid of them all. Like causes produce like effects. It was not for nothing that the orators and philosophers of Greece wrapped their doctrines in mystery and metaphysics; that they wrote books which the world was not to understand, and which, if it had understood them, would have taught nothing. The mystics of Aristotle and of Plato formed a better estate than all the metaphysics of modern days have done to all their professors. A few yards of "Academus' sacred groves" produced a higher rent roll to those whose trade it was to "teach the young idea how to shoot," than as many thousand acres of the dry soil of Attica did to those who only trained the shoots of vines and fig trees. If Aristoxenus wrote a treatise which no one can comprehend, Cicero ought to have had wit enough to have discovered that it was the teacher's object to make it unintelligible. Like the divine Plato, it was his business to see that the pupil should come to him; and to take care also, when he did come, that he should not escape him till he had paid the

uttermost farthing. If these gentlemen had not been Greeks, we should have called them the most impudent cheats that ever existed; but who dare say that of the profound Stagyrite, and of the divine Plato, and of the miraculous Pythagoras, and of all the orators and teachers of the Ilissus and the Portico, of the godlike sages of Athens the city of intellect. Our own teachers have not profited so deeply as they might, by their classical acquirements, when they have curtailed as they have done the periods of Druidical and Pythagorean education: yet it is not a very bad system which, though divided among various hands, sets us down to our spelling books at four or six years of age, and discharges us at twenty-one or twenty-four, baccalaureats and fabricators of nonsense verses. After all, the Druidical education does not seem to have been so very unreasonable. Nine years of hic hæc hoc and nonsense verses alone, might have astonished even a Druid Busby. As it is probable that my period of going to school will arrive again, I will profit by experience, spend the first eight years in whipping my top, and occupy the other in learning Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, German, and Hindostanee. I could weep over past misfortunes, and be enraged at past quackery and imposture. It is full time that the last remains of Druidism should be abolished.

It has been disputed whether the Druids had the use of letters, and what letters they did use. When Cæsar says that it was unlawful to commit their doctrines to writing, it implies the possession of letters. It would not have been called unlawful if it had been impossible. He says moreover, distinctly, "Græcis literis utuntur." It is true that this passage has been said to be spurious. But that is easily said of any passage in any author which does not suit the views of a theorist. If Cæsar wrote his letters in Greek, to prevent the Gallic Druids from

intercepting and reading them, it is a further proof that they knew some letters. The precaution would else have been superfluous, in every sense. Nor does this prevent their alphabet from having been the Greek one, as has been argued against the very passage above quoted; because the Greek language and the Greek alphabet are different things, and, on the same principle, an Englishman might now write a German letter. But this question has filled volumes; and as I may possibly have occasion to examine it again, I need say no more about it at present.

Such is the amount of our real knowledge respecting the Druids. We cannot infer much more, without falling into the dreams of our predecessors; and on that part of the subject, on all the possible relations and concatenations of Druidism, it is not my design to enter. It is easy enough to be satisfied respecting the connexion of their doctrines with those of the other nations of the ancient world, without the necessity of wandering through the regions of the Magi and the Cabiri. Enough, and more than enough of this, has been done already. That they were a political priesthood, and formed an artful and powerful priestocracy, is evident. Yet it does not follow that this government was so complete as it has been elsewhere found in an analogous form, or as it now is in Tartary. If the Druids did not themselves fight, they appear also to have left the military government to the Kings, Chiefs, or Nobles. Yet that these, and the people, were, to use a vulgar phrase, priestridden, is very probable; and hence also, as we may conjecture, arose, in some measure, the base and spiritless character of the western Celtic tribes. The fault was in the government; for it is certain that their brethren of the same remote nation and lineage, in Italy, Greece, Syria, and Africa, were a warlike, as they were an enlightened,

people, at various, and during long, periods. To this we may perhaps in some measure attribute the persevering superiority of the Goths over the western Celts, and their consequent victories and conquests. And while we know from history that the religion of the Goths was far remote from Druidism, we are quite sure that their character was not one to have submitted to such a government.

It remains next to inquire respecting the place of the Druids, or the nations or countries in which this religion and government prevailed. All testimonies seem to agree that their chief seat was in Gaul. When Cæsar imagines that they had migrated originally from South Britain to that country, he seems to have stated this, not from actual knowledge, but because it agreed with his system respecting the communications between Gaul and Britain. There is evidence that they had an establishment in Mona, whether that Mona was Anglesea or Mann. There is much more strong testimony respecting their places in Gaul. Their principal seat appears to have lain between Chartres and Dreux. There was also an establishment at Bayeux, as appears from the verses of Ausonius, often quoted; yet Mr. Turner has remarked that there are none of the monuments commonly called Druidical in this neighbourhood. This is strong collateral evidence against the popular theory of the Circles, were it wanted. It is said that there was here a temple to Belenus, or Baal, in the fourth century; which may perhaps help to confirm what has been said respecting the worship of this Deity. The incidental authority of Pliny, who says "Druidæ Gallorum;" of Vopiscus, who says that Aurelian consulted "Gallicanas Druidas;" of Lampridius, who makes a female Druid speak, "Gallico sermone;" of Suetonius, who says that Claudius abolished the Druidical religion "apud Gallos;" all prove

the same thing, as do the testimonies of Tacitus and some others.

Borlase has no sufficient authority for saying that they originated in Britain, and that Anglesea was their chief seat. With respect to Scotland and Ireland, there is not a shadow of historical evidence to prove that this was the form of religion and government. I have shown that the nature of these mistaken antiquities does not prove it. When the Irish say that St. Patrick burned three hundred books belonging to the Druids, and when Toland is the authority for this, it is easy to know what to believe. If they committed nothing to writing, there were no books to burn. If St. Patrick burned them, it would be proper to prove first that there was such a person as St. Patrick. When the same antiquaries attribute their Norwegian laws to the Druids, it is not difficult to know what value we are to set on their opinions upon this subject in general.

There are only two other arguments in favour of their existence in Scotland and Ireland; tradition and etymology. The value of tradition must be less than common in this case, since no traditions respecting them are preserved in those countries where we know they abounded. Besides, the imposition of names, in the case of Fingal and Ossian, has been formerly shown, in these very pages, to be so modern, that no stress can be laid on such local terms. The use of the word Druid, is as much a question of etymology also, as it is of application in this case; and if, as is admitted, Druidh means a wise man or a magician, simply, and Druidheachd magic, the use of this word proves nothing. That it is a neutral word of this nature, is plain, since it has been used in the Gaelic Bible for the "wise men." Future Borlases and Tolands, arguing on this word, will probably write a few more treatises to prove that Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, were

Druids, or that the Eastern Magi were such; as if that had not been proved already. It is quite as easy as proving that Cologne lies to the east of Jerusalem. That Keysler derives Druid from Draoi and Draoithe, Magician, and that Owen derives it from Derw, an oak, that the Dryad of Greece and the Dervish of the East are the same term, are merely etymological amusements, which go for as much as they are worth.

Yet it is far from improbable, that if the Celts of Gaul and Britain were under a Druidical Hierarchy, the same system extended to Ireland and Scotland during the Celtic periods of those countries. Even that admission takes us back to a remote date, and limits us to a small portion of both countries, in the only times of which we have any information; since we know that a large portion of the population of both, consisted of Gothic tribes at the æra of the Roman invasion. That this people did not submit to a Druidical government or religion, is so clear from their whole history, that it is superfluous to produce the proofs: and if testimony were necessary, Cæsar says decidedly that the Germans had no Druids.

The confusion which has been thrown into this subject, by extending the system of Druidism more widely than the evidence warrants, must be attributed partly to the love of system in the antiquaries who have attached themselves to the subject, and partly to that ignorance respecting the distinctions between the Goths and Celts, already noticed, which has been so prevalent, and which has not been entirely corrected in the popular mind, nor even in the minds of loose antiquaries, to this day. That the Goths and Celts worshipped the same divinities, if under different names, has been one source of these unpardonable errors. But the same fact would prove that the mythology of Greece and Egypt and India were, not

only the same, but that it was, in all, Druidism; since the same divinities can be traced, through the mythology of all nations, to a common source. It has been the disease of the antiquaries of this tribe to hunt down their subject till they have lost sight of the objects of pursuit; and to flounder in mysticism and ænigmas, by tracing remote analogies beyond the bounds of utility or reason, as they have pursued etymologies into the regions of darkness and dreams. It does not even follow, that though all the Celtic nations worshipped the same divinities, as descended from a common parentage, Druidism should have been the religion and policy of the whole. This has been a fertile source of error, proceeding from gross ignorance of, or inattention to, ancient history. It is to argue as if, because Egypt was governed by its priests, Greece must also have submitted to the same dominion and adopted the same political and religious system. It is forgotten by these persons, that Druidism was a political as well as a religious institution, or system. Thus it might have been confined to one branch of the Celtic nations, without any necessity for its existence in others. That it actually was so, we are certain. It is probable that the ancient inhabitants of Italy, the Umbrians, Ausonians, and Etruscans, were a Celtic people. We know what the form of government and religion was in the latter, and we know that it was not Druidism. The same may be said of the Phenicians and their descendants; and therefore it is even possible that Druidism should have been limited, as Cæsar has actually confined it, to a portion of Gaul and a portion of Britain.

Though I have thus examined the great questions which relate to Druids and Druidism, and, as I would hope, placed them in a more rational and better supported point of view than they have hitherto appeared,

there is one collateral subject, not unworthy of notice, which relates to the female Druids.

Cæsar, Pomponius Mela, and Strabo, speak of Druidesses as well as of Druids; and it is said that an inscription was found at Metz to this effect, "Arete Druis Antistita." This should imply a female establishment; a Druidical nunnery. The existence of female Druids seems to be further confirmed, by two stories, told by Vopiscus and by Ælius Lampridius. The first of these, from the information given by Diocletian himself to Maximian, and by him related to the author's grandfather, says that Diocletian conceived the first hope of his future greatness, when only an inferior officer, in an inn "apud Tungros," from the prophecy of a female Druid, who said "Diocletiane, jocare noli; nam Imperator eris cum aprum occideris." The story of Lampridius, which is in the life of Alexander Severus, records that "Mulier Druias exeunti exclamavit Gallico sermone, vadas, nec victoriam speras, nec militi tuo credas." If the Prioress Arete was not an obstacle, it would be easy to suppose, that this term of Druids was applied to witches, or rather to fortune tellers; since the females in question appear to have been an idle itinerant race, wandering about the skirts of camps and elsewhere, in their vocation. This solution might still leave the Druidical priesthood untouched, and as Cæsar has represented it; although it is far from impossible that the Druid magicians and the female fortune-tellers were birds of the same nest. The application of the term Druid to a magician, already noticed, renders this solution easy, without infringing on the presumed celibacy of the Druidical order. The whole may thus prove a mere confusion of terms. Nor is it unlikely that these were of the tribes of fortune-tellers and conjurors who wandered about the Roman provinces, after the time of Augustus in particular; adding to these trades, begging

and the practice of physic, or quackery, and magic. They are noticed by Heliodorus and Apuleius, and supposed to have been Egyptian priests; which could not have been the fact, as these priests were an opulent order, and not likely to become wanderers and beggars.

But, little as we really know about the Druids, and suspicious as we have a right to be about a race which seems to have lived by keeping the people in darkness, and by quackery of all kinds, it is far from unlikely that these very wandering fortune-tellers were the offsets or vagabonds of this order, both male and female. And that there were female Druids, seems really proved by the sculpture I quoted from Montfaucon when describing St. Kilda, as well as by the monument of this Arete. That an overstocked community of artful persons should seek to extend their trade, is not very surprising; particularly when the conquests of the Romans in Gaul and Britain, and the previous incursions and settlements of the Gothic tribes, must have materially diminished their powers and revenues. Such a conclusion will shock the feelings of those advocates of Druidism who have fabricated for themselves visionary systems respecting their dignity, science, and sanctity. But it will not much offend those who know what the Heathen Priests of all ages have been, and how little difference there really was between Cagliostro or Katterfelto and the quacks and knaves who directed the oracle of Delphi and the Eleusinian mysteries.

If I have laughed at a friend of ours for his attempt to prove that the Druids and Fairies were the same people, it is but fair to give him an opportunity of revenge, by proposing to consider the Gipseys as the offspring of the expelled or wandering Druids, who read the palms of Alexander Severus, Diocletian, and Aurelian. But it is first necessary to inquire about their abolition.

Suetonius, speaking of Claudius, says "Druidarum

religionem apud Gallos, diræ immanitatis et tantum civibus sub Augusto interdictam, penitus abolevit." The nature of the horrors belonging to this religion, has not been fully explained; though human sacrifices are described as part of them. Aurelius Victor and Seneca repeat the same fact respecting Claudius; as, I believe, does Tacitus. Pliny's testimony on this head is still more curious; though he seems to attribute this abolition to Tiberius. "Tiberii Cæsaris principatus sustulit Druidas eorum (Gallorum), et hoc genus vatum medicorumque." It is very plain that this people, put down by Tiberius, either was, or implied, a breed of fortune-tellers and (probably) of quack doctors; an association which has descended to our own day under more combinations than that of Dr. Alasco. This brings us to my theory of the Gipseys; and if it could be proved that the tribe suppressed by Claudius and Tiberius, and who, before that, had felt the weight of Augustus, were the Druids of Julius Cæsar, I think nothing would be wanting to make it as good a theory as ever went on two legs, not only for the Gipseys but for the Druids also.

Whether this be so or not, so much difficulty has hitherto attended the Gipseys, that it is at least as good as any of its predecessors. The similarity of the language of the Gipseys to the Celtic stands on nearly the same ground as its resemblance to the languages of the East, as that has been shown by Sir William Jones and Grellman. The truth is, that the argument drawn from language in the case of the Gipseys, is very feeble. The resemblance is not greater than that which has been traced generally between the ancient western and the present eastern languages. The complexion and stature, the breed, in short, is the same. The true Celt differs little from the Gipsey. The trade of the present Gipseys is that of the Druids whom Claudius abolished, and who

wandered about the Roman provinces; it is begging, stealing, and fortune-telling. If this theory does not agree with that of Grellman or Muratori, it remains to be proved that theirs are better. It is supposed that they first appeared in 1417. It is more likely that they first then did something to attract notice, in an age which had scarcely begun to take notice of any thing. Or else the people began to come to their senses in those days, and to pay some more attention to the matters around them. When all Europe was full of Crusades, Leagues, Jacqueries, Baronial German robbers, travelling jugglers, tinkers, and minstrels, disbanded soldiers, thieves, and banditti, a few thousand vagabonds, more or less, were not likely to have attracted much notice. Grellman supposes that they were Pariahs driven from India by Timur. The Pariahs are of a character little likely to assume spirit to emigrate. Besides, what talents in emigration have the Hindoos shown. Alexander, Zinghis, Timur, or Leadenhall Street, they have put their heads quietly through the collar and eaten their rice as they did before. The Pariahs have no fortune-telling propensities. It would demand more talent than Grellman has shown in his heavy discussion, to teach an army of Pariahs their road from Hindostan to Hungary; to show them the way. He brings them up the Persian Gulf, and through Egypt, and so on to Hungary. Hence it was that they were mistaken for Egyptians. Nothing so easy as the mistake; and the voyage both. A fleet of Pariahs under a Pariah Admiral, might gravel Sir William Jones; if it did not Grellman. But there is nothing like a system for converting sea into land, and making all other things smooth. Marsden, Bryant, Pasquier, De Pauw, Polydore Virgil, Bellonius, and Æneas Silvius, are all great authorities, unquestionably. But to what purpose, when they do not agree. Blumenbach says that the scull of a Gipsey resembles that of an

Egyptian mummy. Which proves too much; as Bellonius, who met droves of Gipseys in Egypt, says they were strangers there, and not Egyptians. Yet Munster asserts that they were renegado Christians from Egypt, condemned to eternal wandering for their apostacy. Philip Bergoinas says they were Chaldeans; Bellonius, Wallachians; Polydore Virgil, Syrians; Æneas Sylvius, Tartars; and Ralph of Volaterra makes them Persians. All this is probable, because it agrees so well. The names, Zingari, Ziegenners, Cingari, Bohemiens, Siganos, Gitanos, Heydenen, Egyptians, only serve to prove that there is no want of opinions about their mysterious origin. If they were driven out of India by Timur in 1409, what were they doing till 1417: since Muratori, Munster, Crantz, Ortelius, Gerebrard, and others, fix that date for their first appearance. The two parts of the theory do not fit. As to the Suders, the characters of the people do not even correspond. But why prolong a hypothesis that no one cares about, and no one less than you and I. When I value it enough to write as long a book as Grellman's about it, then you shall see "what you shall see."

I trust you are now satiated with Druidism; and having rendered Classernish the thesis of so long a discussion, I am willing to pass over what remains of it, since it presents no further interest. I need only remind you of what I noticed in speaking of Glen Elg, that it contains the remains of one of the Pictish towers.

In returning by the southern border of this loch, we attempted to get into Loch Roig, but were unable to find the entrance, though we searched for it as you have sometimes beat for a hare which you knew to be sitting. This may give you an idea of the intricacy of these passages; which indeed can sometimes only be found by feeling the way along the line of the shore. Though, to the southward of the two Bernera Islands, this sea is no

longer difficult to navigate, our own difficulties were not over, as we had still to find our vessel. The men soon discovered, at a distance, a mast which they supposed to be the true one; and although I knew that to be impossible, I thought it good policy to yield, that I might fully establish a superiority not yet quite secured, but of which I had already experienced the value. It proved a kelp sloop at anchor in the Kyles Flota, about six miles from our own anchorage. They now confessed that they knew not where it lay or how to find it, and the helm, of course, was again submitted to the landsman. Resolved to complete the triumph, that the important question of pilotage might for ever be set at rest, I stood boldly over to what they considered a continuous range of main land, knowing that there was a very narrow entrance between the two Berneras, and that this range consisted of these islands. I must own, however, that I began to hesitate when I saw a long wall of high rocky cliffs, extending for miles on each hand, not many hundred yards off, with a heavy sea breaking against it: But it was not a time to look alarmed, as the men cried out that we were on a lee shore, and should be lost; and having watched the land diligently, so as to be certain that the division of the islands could not be far off, I stood in with a full sail right against the cliff, when, at the very moment they began to vociferate that it was necessary to "lower away" and take to the oars to pull off shore, the sides of two high rocks receded, and we ran directly into a narrow opening resembling the entrance of a street, the most extraordinary of all the extraordinary places that I ever saw on these strange coasts. Hurra! for the Sassanach, was the cry, when we found ourselves in smooth water, and saw our own mast rocking beneath a lofty cliff, with the long pennant streaming to the breeze.

LEWIS. PIGMIES. DANES. STORNOWAY. SCALPA.

We weighed our anchor at three in the morning; and if we had not weighed it at three, we might have remained in Loch Bernera another week. Half of our success at sea depends on the watchful activity which catches at every, the smallest, advantage. As if it was not the same on land: in war as in travelling, in physic as in love, in law as in boxing, in diplomacy, in swindling, in trade, in argument, in what not. Thus we gained the tide; thus we gained the only wind that was to be found, and which, if we had not taken it when it was going, would have been lost. But the wind was light, though fair: every inch of cloth, therefore, which the ship could carry was spread. There was the square sail, and the gaff top sail, and a topsail studding sail, and the square sail was boomed out to starboard, and the tack of the mainsail was hauled close down, and a water sail was rigged out on the boom. If a man would make his way on shore, if he would get the start of time, if he would win the race from his antagonist or the money from his neighbour, if he would lay up a stock of wealth, or leisure, or of any thing else, let him set all his studding sails, and catch even the breeze that would suffer the thistle's down to slip through its embraces.

Gariveilan, standing off the entrance of Loch Bernera, is rendered a striking object by its lofty arch; but the shore hence, to Ness, is formed of low cliffs, sloping declivities, or sandy shores, presenting very little interest.

At the Butt, the cliffs rise to a greater height, and are displayed in a succession of forms peculiarly rugged and savage, rude black rocks, deep recesses, arches perforated to give passage to the boiling waves, and pillars detached by the force of this turbulent sea, which seems for ever breaking against them in one long and continuous line of foam. But such scenery becomes wearisome from its frequency, and is still more tiresome when accumulated, as it is here, without contrast or variety.

I have had so little luck in the marvellous, myself, though voyaging through a land of ancient and modern marvels, that I must borrow wherever I can, to eke out my scanty store. Dean Monro tells us that there is a Pigmies isle at the north point of the Lewis, (there is no island of any kind there now,) "with ane little kirk in it of their awn handey work. Within this kirk, the ancients of that country of Lewis says that the saids pigmies has been eirded (buried) thair. Maney men of divers countreys has delvit up dieplie the flure of the little kirke, and I myself amanges the leave (rest), and hes found in it, deepe under the erthe, certaine baines and round heads, of wonderful little quantity, allegit to be the baines of the said pigmies, quhilk may be likely, according to sundrie historys that we read of the pigmies." It would be uncivil to doubt the Dean's veracity; as Collins did not, since he has introduced this story into his celebrated Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands; so that all which remains for us to do, is to add these specimens of organic remains to the giants of former philosophers; gentlemen of twenty or thirty feet high, and resting on the equally unquestionable testimonies of such men as Platerus and Le Cat, physicians and anatomists. The former avers that he saw, at Lucerne, an entire skeleton nineteen feet long; and the latter mentions having seen, at Rouen, the remains of a great warrior seventeen feet in length;

whose epitaph, with his name Ricon de Valmont, was engraved on a brass plate upon the coffin. He who believes on testimony, may believe any thing. But when such things happen in our own days of veracity and anatomy and foot rules and incredulity, we ought to excuse Plutarch, when he relates, from Gabinius, that Sertorius had dug up the skeleton of Antæus at Tangier, and that it was thirty yards long. Apollonius goes a few yards beyond him, as his giant measured fifty. It is very easy, as the geologists do, to say that these were the bones of Mastodons, or Mammoths, or Megatheriums; but surely Sertorius could not have mistaken an elephant for a man, and it is not customary to bury Mastodons in coffins with brass plates and epitaphs, nor to give them such names as Ricon de Valmont. As it is equally impossible that such a distinguished physician and anatomist as Monsieur Le Cat should tell a falsehood, I must confess that I believe in Antæus, and even in the giant of Phlegon, Macrosyris, whose life extended to five thousand years. As to the giants of the Edda, Ymir, Nor, and Tarbantes, it is well known that they were particularly well-grown personages, though there is some dispute whether the former measured thirty miles or three hundred.

But great as you may imagine my credulity, and the Dean's, to be, it is as nothing to my Lord Monboddo; who, besides the tails, believes in the skeleton of a giant ninety-six feet high, found in Thessalonica, and well attested: while he is also convinced that there are double-tongued men in Taprobana, who can carry on two conversations at once, (his Lordship and Diodorus forgot to ask if the brains were double); that Helen was ravished by Paris at eighty years of age, and that she was a beauty at a hundred. As to the Reverend Dean, however, I am a little afraid that he has here said the thing which is not: a theory, on my part, which will explain the skele-

ton of Platerus, as well as many other marvels with which the world abounds. This is a surprisingly simple solution of difficulties of this class, you will not deny; and unwilling as we may be to have recourse to it, it is, in nine cases of ten, a far more probable fact than those which the assertion is intended to prove. In the matter of the Dean and the pigmies, as there is no such island as he describes, unless it is one of the Flannan isles which he means, we have no resource but to think that he has been either dreaming, or trying experiments on his readers. It is, perhaps, well that his book is so little and so vacant: if the rest of what is meant for truth be like this specimen, the less of it the better. That it is not far otherwise in the affair of geography, I had occasion to show some time back. On the subject of islands, and being also on the subject of veracity, I must not here pass by Master Barry, Giraldus Cambrensis, whom I have had occasion to quote more than once; as authority, such as it is. He relates, of an island in Ireland, under the ban of St. Patrick, (protection would have been the right word,) that no woman, nor even any female animal, can enter it. As if this was not enough, he has another where women cannot be delivered; so that there can be no children: what a complication of happiness. But even that is not all; for there is a third where nobody can putrefy; and, as the climax of all, another where no person ever did die, ever does die, or ever will die. And these are the sort of old women to whom we are referred, for historical and philosophical authority; and whom, even I have been obliged to quote. Why, Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of such people as these "credunt simulque fingunt" men; "immeasurable"—historians.

At the Butt, which forms the northern headland but presents nothing remarkable, we found many boats em-

ployed in fishing; and their whole style appeared so new, that we lay to for the purpose of bringing one of them alongside. They were manned by nine men, having eight rowers in double banks; a practice no where else in use in this country. The purchase of their fish, and a bribe of tobacco, soon made us good friends; and we found them a lively, good-humoured people, totally unlike, in manners as well as persons, to their neighbours. They present an interesting singularity in the population of these islands; being of pure Danish origin, although speaking unmixed Gaelic, as our seamen assured us. It would not have been easy to mistake them for Highlanders; as they resembled exactly the people whom we had every day met manning the northern timber-freighted ships. Fat and fair, with the ruddy complexions and blue eyes of their race, their manners appeared peculiarly mild and pleasing; although their aspect seemed, at first sight, rude enough; their fair hair being matted, as if from their birth it had never been profaned by comb or scissars, and looking very much like Lord Foppington's wig; and their dress being of woollen only, with conical caps, and without handkerchief or vestige of linen. The tangled and matted forest must have impeded the travels of its tenants considerably; and as to pursuing them through the dense underwoods, that must have been impossible. But this was a primitive fashion among the northern nations. In ancient days, among the Franks at least, this long hair was also a mark of dignity: and if entanglement and dirt were additionally honourable, as long nails are in China, and as Julian esteemed respecting his beard, my friends of the Butt were crinite, capillate, and crinigerous enough to compete for any honours. When "Capillatus" meant noble, and "Criniger" was Prince and Lord, round heads and croppies must have been in great disgrace, as in some times of

late date. Instead of cutting off a Knight's spurs, they then cut off his hair; and thus we learned to shave our felons, and thus the slaves in Greece were not allowed to wear long hair, and the form of their tonsure was called θρὶξ 'ανδροποδώδης, and thus French citizenship taught us to crop our heads and ruin the hair dressers, and thus fashions are concatenated and affiliated, and thus openings are made for learned treatises on Euplocamy and Cacoplocamy, which I leave to Mr. Stewart, perruquier, of Broad Street, whose learned treatise I trust you have read, and to antiquaries who have greater talents in splitting hairs than myself.

We found, on subsequent inquiry, that they constituted an independent colony, if it may so be called; scarcely mixing with their neighbours, and never indeed but when brought unavoidably into contact with them, as at markets: the other inhabitants, in return, considering them in the light of foreigners, and maintaining no voluntary communication with them. They were, however, well spoken of, as acute and intelligent, and as being very industrious fishermen. They possess this green northern extremity of the island in joint tenantry; and their agriculture appeared to be carried on in the same slovenly manner that it usually is upon this system. Judging from their aspect, however, we considered them as much better fed than their neighbours, and understood that they only fished for their own consumption.

The existence of a detachment of the original Northmen who so long possessed a large share in these islands, in a state of such purity, and of a separation which is almost hostile, appears a remarkable circumstance; but it is, perhaps, more remarkable that it should be the case no where else, and that the breed should, throughout all the rest of the islands, have so completely coalesced with

the native Celts. Even in Shetland, and Orkney, where a separate northern breed might have been more naturally expected, nothing of this kind occurs, nor do the natives of these islands present, by any means, such distinct traces of a Scandinavian origin as this little community. The characteristic circumstance of the matted hair, is peculiar to these few individuals, yet scrupulously preserved; and it must have descended, with them, from the most ancient times. That the whole of this island, or at least the greater part, was originally Norwegian, is not improbable; and Macleod, to whom as Chief, it belonged, was unquestionably of northern descent. I have mentioned the facts more in detail elsewhere. It is a circumstance not less remarkable, that, in thus retaining their purity, they should have lost their language. It is true enough, that, even in cases of extended and rapid conquest, the conquerors, if less numerous, sooner or later acquire the language of the conquered; but this ought only to happen where the breeds or the people intermix. When they remain separate, different languages often remain for a long time singularly separated; and it is well remembered that even to a late period in the town of Nairn, and in Dunkeld, both bordering on the Low Country, one part of the population spoke Gaelic and the other English; so that, even at different extremities of the same town, the inhabitants were unintelligible to each other. A similar fact occurs at Dieppe; and the history of the Poltese of that town, bears indeed a very strong resemblance to the people of the Butt of Lewis; except that, in addition to their other distinctions from their neighbours, they preserve that distinctness of language which my friends had lost. They intermarry, exclusively, in their own colony, their dresses are still those of the sixteenth century, and they are absolute foreigners to the people; while they are stationary,

in other respects, at the point of civilization which these have so long passed.

It is also remarkable, if this question is considered in a more general view, that the Gaelic language in the Islands should be nearly as little corrupted, or intermixed with the northern or Scandinavian tongue as on the mainland. This remark does not interfere with the fact well known to philologists, that nearly one half of the Irish and Gaelic dialects of the Celtic tongue is common to them with the Gothic languages. My inquiries were particularly directed to this object; and, as far as they extended, I was almost invariably informed that the Gaelic of the islands was as pure as that of the mainland; a singular circumstance when it is considered that they must have been, perhaps, more than half peopled by Northmen, and that so large a portion of the names of places is of Scandinavian origin. In this instance, at least, the existing language offers no clue for tracing the migrations, descents, or revolutions of tribes; whatever light may be derived from topographic appellations. Here was a long period of Norwegian dominion, in which that language must have existed; as may indeed be proved by the number of topographic names derived from it. It is barely possible that, like the Normans in England, the conquerors may, even during that period, have conformed to the prevailing tongue, or that they had failed to produce a permanent and marked change in the language; but it is also possible that the northern was not swallowed up in the Gaelic language till after the Norwegian powers had evacuated the country.

There is a very singular rock not far from the Butt, near a place called Oreby, and to which, perhaps, there is not a parallel instance any where. It is a curved mass, about twenty feet high, or more, standing as erect as a body of such a figure can do, on the sea shore, and of a

very graceful form. The general rock of this shore, which is gneiss, being frequently bent in the strata, it is easy to see that this is one from which the surrounding parts have fallen away. Finding nothing else to interest us, we stretched across to the Aird, leaving behind the wide but dangerous bay Loch Tua, and anchored in Loch Stornoway.

Stornoway is a large town, and, in this remote country, it forms an agreeable surprise. It is one of the three burghs (Campbelltown and Inverlochy being the others) erected by James VI, as elsewhere mentioned, with the design of introducing civilization into the Highlands. Of its scandal and politics, I heard, and might have recorded a great deal; but it is only to change the names, and these are nearly the same every where; at Penzance and Stornoway, in your own gude town, and in Grosvenor square. I had the happiness of being at a coterie, and of playing at whist; nor did I find but that coteries of tea and whist at Stornoway, are species of a genus that exists every where. A cockney is apt to wonder how people live, and how they look, and what they do, and what they talk of, in such places; and if it be a lady, she will wonder how they are dressed. Scandal and politics, cards and tea, idleness and grumbling, silk and muslins, newspapers, affectation, novels, births, marriages, courtships, and bankruptcies, the world is pretty much the same, mutatis mutandis, in London and in Stornoway. As to fashions, (I must say a word for the ladies, or Lady Scott would not read my letters,) it is said that they are propagated in England by mail coaches; but they find their way to the Highlands full fast, without that aid. Here the bonnets were of the Oldenburgh capacity, and the colour of the pelisse was that of Blucher's mustachios. Bond street could not have displayed more orthodoxy. The morning half-boots were of the Wellington grey,

and the evening shoes were of white kid. So much the better: this is all as it should be; but I have not time now to give the reasons why. These belong to the fashionable science of political economy, (every thing now is a matter of fashion,) on which you may possibly think that I have given you more than enough in my devious peregrinations. But this rapidity of transmission in fashions is not limited to Stornoway, where the scandal, and the quadrilles of Almack's, and Madame Triaud's last new flounce, might easily have been imported, via Wapping, in return for a cargo of fish.

I once left London for these very islands, just three hours before a late most gracious personage entered it; but the mail coach and a swift sailing cutter united, did not allow me to be the bearer of the important news. Far from it; since I found all the chivalry of the Highlands and the Islands, even to the remotest point of Shetland, in a state of excitement as high as even Mr. Burke could have desired on a far other subject; and was often hailed and boarded at sea, rather to receive than to give communication. To be sure, as a philosophical reason for this, there is the proverbial rapidity of evil news. But on another, and a very different, occasion, wandering through one of the remotest Highland valleys, I found all the old crones and carls with their eyes bent on the sky; and then first learned of an expected eclipse; and that too, in a land which the voices of Wing and Partridge had never reached, and where the pithy prognostics of Royston had never found their way. Even in St. Kilda, and heaven knows how they got there, the only two women who were not barefooted, displayed a certain kind of shoes, reticulated, as Johnson would say, with interstices, by innumerable strings; a fashion then scarcely six months old: and, with the same sandaliform adornments, were covered the red cuits of all the High-

land nymphs to whom the luxury of a shoe was known. Such is the consequence of that laudable ambition which causes the toe of the clown to trespass on the courtier's heel, and which produces many more important effects than the galling of his kibe. The beau or prodigal of the tiers etat who cannot rival the kingdom's peer in wealth and address, may at least emulate him in expense and dress; and she of Stornoway or St. Kilda, who only knows of a Duchess that her bonnet is three yards in diameter and her pelisse trimmed with frivolity, feels as great in the acquisition of the same insignia, as if, like the old Scythians, who expected to inherit their antagonist's brains by cutting off his head, the honours and the note had been included in the delicious bandbox. And as distance and obscurity give consequence to spectral images, so that last new fashion, which might wing its way across Smithfield or Portsoken ward unnoticed, is assuredly arrested at Penzance, where every fair one is expected to wear it unless she would be condemned, as Dogberry says, to eternal redemption. Despise not these important facts; as I shall show you at some future day, that there is more virtue in the cut of the last invented female shoe, or the newest bonnet, in these cases, than superficial philosophers are aware of.

The country every where in Lewis, except along the margins of the sea, and in the immediate neighbourhood of this town, is open, brown, bare, and uninteresting. Perhaps I was wrong to question its producing double crops in the days of Abaris and Pythagoras, as it certainly produces double crops still; the rushes of spring being succeeded by the peat of autumn. As usual in the islands, there is a green line round the sea shores; but, throughout the interior, it is now black as ink, and bare of every thing, almost of heath itself; whatever it might have been in happier times, when Apollo paid it more

frequent visits. Doubtless, Grannus the Yellow-haired shines above it still; but it is upon such a firmament of rain and clouds, that he might as well have remained flirting with the Muses on Delphi's steeps. A much scantier crop, even of heath and rushes, is not easily found, than in this most Hyperborean of all Hyperborean islands. If there was any thing else to mark, I did not mark it; or else I can recollect nothing; which amounts to the same. As to Stornoway itself, it is a place of trade, chiefly in the fisheries; Lord Seaforth's house stands near it; there are the ruins of an old castle on the shore; the harbour is good and much frequented; and I hunted wild pigeons and cormorants among the coves which are found along the Pebble Head and the Chicken Head.

But I must not forget that I did see something, of which the modification was new, although the principle is common. Whether it proves that the Stornowegians think what Mahomet was falsely accused of teaching, namely, that women have no souls, I shall not, on so short an acquaintance, decide. Droves of these animals were collected in the neighbourhood, trudging into the town from the moors, with loads of peat on their backs. The men dig the peat, and the women supply the place of horses; being regularly trained to it. I was also informed that they did actually draw the harrows; but this I did not witness. But though it should be true still, as it certainly was not long since, it must be a proper and laudable custom, because it has classical usage and antiquity in its favour. The Greeks, who are our authority for all kinds of philosophy, poetry, oratory, politics, painting, boasting, and many more things, have set us examples on this head; and if the Stornowegians follow them, and we do not, it only proves that we merely applaud, because we have been taught to do so.

at Westminster school, what these better-grounded classical scholars practise. In Sicily, to this day, the women are harnessed in the mill, and a man drives them; perpetuating the ancient chivalrous usages of Magna Græcia. To work in a mill, and to be an Aspasia or a Phryne, were the only two roads to female honours in that sublime country; and which led to the highest degree, must not be told to the ladies of Stornoway.

There are two modes of arguing this question of the mill and the harrow, for the fair sex; one on the broad bottom of utility, a principle which, among many great metaphysicians, forms the basis of all morals and politics; and the other on the principle of chivalry, which, according to another great metaphysician, is dead and gone. But I need not dilate on matters so obvious; except to remark that the chivalrous principle would be rather inconvenient in the Highlands, as there is neither time nor money to spend upon idolatry. That women were created to be looked at, is certainly a beautiful refinement on the usages of those savages who load them with more than one half of the burden. While young and pretty, it may not be very irrational; since sun, moon, stars, roses, and picture galleries, are nothing in the comparison. Stornoway is another matter. Perhaps the division of labour is not indeed very fair here; yet I know not that it is much otherwise. There are no horses; a man cannot dig, and fish, and carry peats all at once, and a family cannot go without fire. The Stornowegian may fairly say with the Italian Orpheus, "Che faro senza Euridice." To be sure, I have seen a great lazy fellow ride his wife across a ford; which, I admit, does not look like civil and polished usage. Yet so much do opinions differ in the world, that it is the chartered privilege and "limited service" of the women of Holland, that they should be ridden into the boats by the other gender: and should the

horse presume to take the place of the grey mare on this occasion, it is probable that Ostend, Monnikendam, and Purmerend, would not be pacified without the aid of a couple of regiments of dragoons.

It is amusing here to consider how often extremes meet; unwillingly enough, now and then. Mrs. Woolstonecraft, and others, are for the equality of rights. Here they are to be found; since equality of rights implies equality of duties. The ill-used fair who, according to this system, would sit in the House of Commons in one rank of life, must carry peat at Stornoway in another: of fighting, and chimney sweeping, and such like equal rights, I need say nothing. But the rights of the Woolstonecraft women are not the rights of the Stornoway women; like most other rights, they include all we desire and exclude all we hate. But Euridice must here do what is allotted to her, or else matters must stand still, or the Highlands must be reformed. Nor do I know that her character is improved or her happiness augmented, here or any where else, by reading novels, spending money in trash and trifles, lying in bed, paying visits, neglecting her house and her children, and being worshipped. Yet, at the worst, Donald only considers his wife as an animal of burden, on special occasions. And in this he is an honester fellow than the heathen Athenian, with whom I did him the injustice to compare him a little while ago. But if she is an animal here, what shall we say of the Roman laws, which only considered her as a Thing, a moveable, a stool. Mahomet has been sadly calumniated. After all, he only said that there were no old women in Paradise: which is clear; partly because we know very well that there is no such thing as an old woman, and for the better reason, which he gave, himself, that every body becomes young who is admitted within its gates. As to the Roman law

of female things, if it was Egeria who dictated it to Numa in the midnight grove, she seems to have had as little consideration for her sex, as the petticoated novelists of the present day, whose chief delight seems to be to abuse their own gender, and whom if we were to believe, the drawing of harrows or turning of mills would be the fittest occupation for them. We can only hope that they do not speak, as having a very intimate knowledge of the propensities of any other portion of the sex than themselves.

It is impossible that Donald should ride his wife on the Grecian principle, since it is very certain that his progenitors held this better part of us in high veneration. He would be unworthy of his claims to Ossian, could he even think of such a thing. It may indeed be questioned whether he has not apostatized in this matter; or else it will eventually prove that he is not descended from the blood of the Fingals. The law of his chiefs professes to be rigidly Salique; and there is something Salic, it must be admitted, in this riding and harrowing system. Now, even putting Ossian to one side, if he will look into the Eyrbiggia Saga, he will find that females were then highly honoured and respected. I quoted Regner Lodbrog and Bonduca on a former occasion; and, not to accumulate examples, shall only further add, from Tacitus, that the Sitones obeyed a woman. Every body has heard of Queen Tomyris, and she also was a Scythian, and, of course, a Scot. But these were barbarians; and surely there can be no greater mark of ignorance and barbarism than for the more dignified to submit to the weaker vessel, or for man, that "piece of work," to crouch to petticoat government. It must be from our German ancestry that we have derived our own folly in these matters, together with our juries, and a few other particulars. The sublime Romans and Greeks, who have taught us all

we know, except this, understood these things better, when the divine Socrates, the paragon of morals and philosophy, lent his wife to Alcibiades, and when the virtuous Cato parted with his darling Marcia to Hortensius; and this, not as a very rare civility either, since it was secundum "veterem Romanorum consuetudinem." If you doubt me, ask Strabo. And these are the gentlemen for whom we undergo a Druidical education, that we may learn from them, morals and manlike virtues, and quantities, and nonsense verses.

I was about to proceed and become very learned on the Salique law of the Highlands; but as I find that I am on "cineres dolosos," I shall conclude with an argument from Cornelius Agrippa, to prove the natural superiority of women, and to show the impropriety of all these Salic usages. It is, that if a man and a woman fall into the water, the man sinks while the woman floats. If you wish to know the other reasons which he assigns in addition, I beg you will read his long chapter yourself.

You must not, however, suppose that because Donald rides his wife over a ford occasionally, or makes a packhorse of her, that he is an ungallant husband, and that Girsael or Silis is an Emma or a Griselda. I dare say a Highland wife can flyte when it is necessary, rather than renounce the darling privilege of her sex: but I do not know that Judge Buller's baculine law is law here. On the contrary, wherever I have been intimate with the interior councils, I have witnessed harmony that might tempt a celibataire to renounce that state which Parnell has lauded in bad verse. If Donald does not seem a very fond husband, he is a very careful one; and I know not, that, under all the circumstances of the case, circumstances which it would be very ungallant to notice, much ardour is to be expected. There is something in the very dimensions of his house, and in the community and con-

densation of his focal circle, which squeezes the family into a joint affection, chickens, collies, and all. Such is the necessary chemical and mechanical result where there is a previous bottom of affinity: the same force exerted in the cabin of an East Indiaman, or in that of Captain Cook, is known, on the very same principles, to increase the repulsion of the heterogeneous particles. If his juvenile love is not peculiarly fiery, it is the more persisting when rivers rage and rocks grow cold; and the mutual harmony seems to stand the tooth of devouring eld as well as that of Mrs. Anderson and her jo.

I need scarcely tell you that the holy state is here unknown, which claims for its supporters the Nazarenes and the more ingenious Essenians, besides the Egyptian priests, the Gymnosophists, Bramins, Pythagoreans, Hierophants, and the whole army of Friars, white, black, and grey; gentlemen who seem to have had before their eyes no fear of the anathema which threatened them with "dæmonibus maximas dare pænas post obitum;" from which doubtless we have derived the lighter punishment of leading apes, denounced against the tardy fair. Nor is there any danger of Donald's being flogged for opsigamy by the Highland nymphs, as the Spartans were of old. Marriage is here as much matter of course as eating and drinking; and as the sexes are more truly balanced than in Arabia, no pining damsel need sing, "Oh what will I do for a man." I know not if this omniogamy is a relic of the fashion of the Macniels; nor do I know whether it is to show their contempt of Malthus, that they now marry, as we are told, more than in former days, because they have less prospect of a settlement and a livelihood than in those times. This is reasoning on inverse ratios, it must be admitted; but, be the cause what it may, Donald might take the Roman oath with

safety; "tu equum habes—tu uxorem habes," since if he is never without a wife, he is equally sure of having three or four horses. That is an additional reason against riding his wife over the fords.

But if there is thus much of the harmony of the number two in the Highlands, it would not be amiss, considering the present comparative balance of potatoes and children, if these good people would follow the matter up a little further, and stick to the harmony of the number three. It would be an act worthy of the divine Plato, if, for some time to come, he would teach them how to produce but the one child necessary to complete the triangle. For the divine Plato says, (if you doubt me read his Timæus,) that the object of marriage is to produce a triangle. Such is the harmonic law of three, imprinted on the prolongation of the universe. "Les Grecs, qui ont écrit tant de phrases et si peu de choses" were a great people; and Plato was greater still, as he never wrote "des phrases." They possessed some effectual schemes, it cannot be denied, for preventing the two angles from producing more than one; but if marriages did not terminate in a polygon now and then, the harmony of the world, as well as of the nursery, would soon come to a close. Nevertheless, Benbecula and a few other places might profit by the Law of the Triangle. And this is called sublime, and the Timæus is philosophy. It is a fine thing to be Divine, and a Greek, and a Poet, and a Philosopher, and Plato.

There is an old town of Stornoway, as well as a new one; it is a black town, and it is black enough. The two, standing cheek by jowl, offer an admirable illustration of the misfortunes which improvements have brought upon the Highlands: not but what the anti-reformists would be glad enough to take the new fashions while they retain the old ones, to have thus the irrecon-

cileable and opposite virtues and vices both together; dirt and cleanliness, industry and activity, poverty and wealth. But I need not describe the fashions of Old Stornoway; the parallel and the substitutes which it presents to and for the customs and the lavender water of the New. I had occasion to allude to them on some former occasion; and possibly the smell may be in your nostrils still. We may venture to relieve the present politics, whether of the middens of the Old, or the tea-tables of the New Town, with a retrospect into the politics of ancient days: politics which, duly reasoned on, as Hume or Tacitus might have done, and as I dare not venture to do, would teach what I must not insinuate, and induce us, possibly, to be content with modern degenerate Chiefs, potatoes, laws, shoes, English, sheep, and the reign of King George the Fourth, in place of Neill, Rory, Tormot, or Torquil Dhu.

The district of Lewis was the property of a Rory Macleod, (the Chief, I believe, of that name, and the great ancestor of the present representative), about the year 1612, when it fell into the hands of the Mackenzie of Kintail, the present possessor. If it be possible to make a long story short and intelligible at the same time, a sketch of this revolution will convey a pretty clear idea, a confused one I should rather say, of the political condition of the islands, even down to so late a period as the end of the sixteenth century. "Ex uno disce omnes." This specimen will serve in place of many more. I have not professed to be a compiler of anecdotes which have been told and retold till the world is weary of them; and I do not know that the exploits of these our barbarian ancestors are particularly deserving of record.

This worthy Chief, having lost his first wife and her only issue, a son, thought fit to repudiate a second wife,

and to bastardize her only son; a specimen of the domestic morals of the times, as it is of the accuracy with which the law of lineal and legal descent, of which we have heard so much, was maintained, and of the respect which was paid to it. By a third wife, he had two sons, besides three others, illegitimate. At the death of this old Rory, the eldest son of the third wife, Torquil Dhu, took possession of the Lewis; on which the bastardized brother, Torquil of Coygach, applied for the assistance of his mother's kindred, the Mackenzies of Kintail, to recover his inheritance. The event of this was, that a servant of Torquil Dhu was employed to murder the usurper; which he effected by enticing him, with seven of his friends, to dinner, on board a Dutch ship which he had seized for that purpose; and there, having secured the whole party, he delivered them over to Kintail, by whom they were beheaded in 1597. No advantage, however, was derived from this heroic act: the conspirators having been pursued and worsted, with the usual slaughter, by Neill, one of the bastard brothers; who appears to have been the only honest man of the tribe, since he secured the island for the benefit of the children of Torquil Dhu and of his legitimate brother by the last wife, Tormot. Kintail had now married the daughter of Torquil of Coygach; and having kidnapped young Tormot, persuaded his son-in-law to surrender to him his whole right over this contested possession.

But it was not destined that he should enjoy it so easily; and the subsequent events afford an amusing picture of the light in which these people were viewed in the Lowlands, even at so late a period as that above-mentioned. The gentlemen of Fife, having heard of an island, the seat of such troubles, and reported to be a fertile spot, engaged in what was then looked upon as a bold and difficult enterprise, namely, no less than an

attempt to colonize it and civilize the inhabitants; "if that," as the record says, "were possible." To effect this purpose, they obtained from the King, James the sixth, a grant of the Lewis, in 1589; just as, in our own days, we have obtained grants over the properties of the Potowmacks, the Micmacs, and the Chickasaws. By the assistance of troops and artificers, they thus took possession; hoisting his Majesty's flag, and building a "pretty little town:" but not without some resistance, in which one of the Fife lairds was taken prisoner, but afterwards ransomed. Finding, however, that their new possesions were not very easily held, they adopted the good old policy of setting again by the ears the brothers who had united against them; bribing Neill with part of the spoil, and cutting off Murthow's head.

Kintail, now ousted of his claims by this southland colony, set Tormot at liberty, in hopes of stirring up an insurrection; designing, probably, to step in once more over the neck of his former prisoner. But the colonists were here on their guard, and he was apprehended and committed to Edinburgh Castle; from which, however, he was afterwards released, to wait for better times. These were not long in arriving. Neill and his friends, the colonists, soon came to blows; and the former being shortly afterwards backed by Tormot, the latter were expelled. Nothing daunted, however, they returned with a fresh commission from his Majesty, and forced Tormot to capitulate; but at length, wearied out with the resistance of Neill, and with their own losses and vexations, the colony was withdrawn. Kintail, who appears to have been a politician worthy of better days, on this, obtained a surreptitious gift of the property, under the great seal; to the no small indignation of his Majesty, whose great seal appears to have been very little under his own controul, but who, nevertheless, in the plenitude of

his anger, revoked the grant, and restored it to three of the original Fife colonists. We have heard not a little of the affection which the Highlanders possessed for their hereditary line of Stewart kings. It must be owned that it was very "chivalrous," when it was the consequence of such civilities on the part of that stock, as this grant of their barbarian lives and properties; which Solomon must have esteemed them. A new war was now consequently undertaken against Neill, who was assisted by the wily Kintail; this gentleman, at the same time, supplying the colonists with stores, which were so managed as to be intercepted by his friend Neill. Thus, the colonists and their forces were again obliged to retire into Fife; leaving a fort behind them, which was, however, assaulted and taken by Neill; so that the Fife adventurers, being at length dispirited, consented to dispose of their rights to Kintail for a sum of money. Some fruitless resistance to this new order of things was afterwards made by Neill; but it is unnecessary to go further into the history, and the Lewis remains the property of the Mackenzies to this day.

I hope our southern friends will approve of this specimen of ancient Highland manners; but you must now accompany me through scenes in which politics have no share. The whole shore from Stornoway to the southward, is deeply indented by inlets or sea-lochs; but it is in the division of Harris, principally, that these are remarkable for their picturesque characters. The land is not mountainous until we reach Loch Brolum; although the high cliffs are often sufficiently interesting. Indeed, the whole country northward, is a low moorland; Munach and Barvas, its two only elevations, not exceeding 800 feet in height. It is about Loch Brolum that the mountainous land of Lewis joins the lower tract which forms the greater part of this estate; the boundary of the two, stretching irregularly over towards the Gallan Head.

Loch Seaforth forms a very long, sinuous, indentation, extending twelve miles inland, and reaching so near to Loch Kenhulavig, which is the last bay in Loch Bernera, as nearly to intersect the island. Loch Luerbost, which is somewhat picturesque, from its containing islands, nearly meets the same eastern waters. The former coincides with Loch Trolamarig, and is not unpicturesque at the entrance; as the mountains of the interior begin now to take a share in the back grounds.

We paid a visit to the lighthouse on Scalpa, which, from economy, or some other motives, probably much better known to you than me, is the only one throughout all the circuit of the Western Isles. Not that it is the only one desired by seamen, as you have undoubtedly heard quite as often as myself, and as many shipwrecks testify. It is not for me, landsman as I am, to pretend to have an opinion on such a subject, and least of all, before a Commissioner like your Honour; but my different captains were desirous of a light on the Rinns of Isla, of one on Barra Head, and of another on the Butt of the Lewis, at least, for the sake of ships arriving from the westward. The multiplicity of harbours renders marks of this nature less necessary in the inner channels, as vessels are not there often compelled to keep the sea at night.

The economy of lights is among the most misplaced of economies. Witness Orkney as an example: but I need not tell you of the terrific Sanda; you have transplanted to it the light that stood on North Ronaldsha. It was meant well, but the Orkney men have doubtless told you that you ought to have preserved that one also; and that the evil is increased instead of being diminished. The men of Shetland will also tell you that you have built the light on Sumburgh Head, too high: it will be invisible when it is most wanted. That light should have been on Moussa, and there should have been another

near the entrance of Lerwick harbour. But, my dear Mr. Commissioner, you have heard all this before; and you too have looked with an anxious eye through the mists of Hialtland, and have trembled at the sound of the breakers on the invisible Sanda, its flat surface scarcely rising above the wild sea that almost meets across it. Every one knows what it is to see the twinkle of a light in a dark night, when he has been benighted in the forest, or on the wild moor, his road lost and his goal at an unknown distance. But what is this to the bright and placid star, which shines in the midst of commotion and turbulence, as if all was at peace, like the serene spirit in a troubled world, reminding us of domestic comforts and repose from toil, when the sea and sky are mixed in one pitchy gloom, when the storm is around and the wished-for harbour far away. He only who is benighted on the "melancholy main," can know how to value the lovely light, which, like a friendly and gentle meteor, points to his way, which leads to his haven of rest, which tells him that his troubles will shortly end. But this is your affair more than mine. I shall visit these lands no more. You may yet want the guiding and warning star, and I can only remind you of your wants by crying in your ears, while it is yet time, "link, your Honour."

As far as a lighthouse can be an agreeable residence, the old gentleman who keeps this one, has a very charming little kingdom of his own; and if physiognomy can be trusted, he seemed to think himself a king, and a happy one. We talked of politics, for all your lighthouse men are politicians by office. And he talked most profoundly of the American war, and of commerce, and of the dominion of the sea, and of Bonaparte, and of all those abstruse and unhackneyed topics which we daily hear discussed with equal profundity, in coffee houses, and over a bottle of wine among statesmen, and by sugar

brokers on the Exchange, and in various and sundry places, times, and societies, by officers, curates, collectors of customs, justices of the peace, sea-captains, linen-drapers, and apothecaries. Politics form a profound science, assuredly. And I know not why the fire-king of Scalpa should not dictate to one half, or to the other half of the world, as well as the hireling and hackneyed Mr. We, who sits behind his desk once a day, for wages of three hundred pounds a year, teaching the people what they are to believe respecting themselves and all Europe, and dictating oracles to those who have wisdom enough to listen to them. When I read and believe what is called the leading article of a newspaper, I will also bottom my political creed on the politics of the Scalpa lighthouse; and when I borrow the opinion of one who is likely to have as little judgment as myself, about the matter, and whose judgment is less likely to be unbiassed by anger, or interest, or hire, why, then I will borrow that of the Regent of the Lamps of Scalpa. Yet thus, we of the world are governed and led by We of the Post and the Chronicle; and ten thousand men of sense and education choose to imagine that their own opinions are of less value than that of some scribbler, which they can purchase for sixpence a day, and whom that very sufferance and purchase erect to the dictatorship.

Somebody wonders how it happens that any man will consent to be imprisoned in a lighthouse, particularly if it should be such a lighthouse as the Bell Rock, or the Edystone. That is a silly wonderment enough; because it is a ship without the chance of drowning. There can be no dispute about the comparative merits; besides which, the Castor and Pollux of the Pharos are not obliged to turn out and reef topsails in a gale of wind, to watch for ice islands on the mast-head, to overhaul tackle and furl frozen sails in a snow-storm, to take in stud-

ding sails in a squall, launch guns overboard in a gale, stand at the pumps for a week, or fight the ship; nor are there any lee shores, or rocks, or shoals, or planks to start, or short water, or weeviled biscuits, or captain, lieutenant, midshipman, quarter-master, boatswain, or cat-o'nine-tails. The odds are hollow. There is one piece, however, of the natural and political history of a lighthouse, particularly if it should be the Edystone, which may assist in solving the problem. The men are all married, and they leave their wives on shore. The records of the Edystone most ungallantly show that no bachelor ever enlists on that service. As to the reason why it should be a peculiar and additional happiness to the happy state, thus to part from all it holds dear, I must leave it to Plato to solve; hoping that some modern Platonist can derive it, in some manner, as a corollary from the harmonic Theory of the Triangle.

We were not, however, sorry to leave the lighthouse and its politics, as there was a most insufferable smell of oil; not that of the lamps, but of about 500 whales which had been caught and boiled the week before. The shore and the sea were covered with their vile carcases, of which the very sea birds themselves had at last got a surfeit. The grass smelt of oil, the flowers smelt of oil, the sea smelt of oil, the very rocks smelt of oil. The whale which is common here, is the bottle-nosed or piked whale, which follows the herrings in large shoals. They had often amused us with their gambols and their spouts; but, on one occasion also, we had been indebted to one of them for no small alarm. The abominable uxorious beast had mistaken our boat for his wife, and made love so rudely that he had nearly knocked one of the men overboard with his tail. The mode of taking them is simple enough, and argues much for their civilization and good government. Like wild geese, they are under

the command of a leader, to whom, unlike their two-legged enemies, they pay such implicit deference, as to follow him, even to death; making, as the politicians above-mentioned do the hack writer, his folly the measure of what little sense they may possess. The leading fish is selected and driven by boats, noises, and harpoons, till he runs ashore; when all the rest imitate him, thinking, doubtless, if they think at all, that he is going to make conquests on terra firma, and that what is sauce for the goose must be sauce for the gander.

To any person who may delight in euphonous names, and is desirous of exercise in orthography, pronunciation, and etymology, I may recommend the lochs and farms that lie from here to the point of Roneval. You must, on this account, take one general description of the scenery for the whole; as these names are neither to be written nor pronounced in prose nor verse a second time. Once is quite enough. What would Horace have thought of Ghoecrabba, Trolamarig, Groesava, Gremishader, Proclapul, Beckieweck, and Nishishee. It is well that his journey to Brundusium was not a voyage along the eastern shore of Harris. But there is nothing so bad that we cannot find a worse. For what is this to Wales; where I have travelled through Trwsgwl, and Trygyvylchi, and Synodfymnonddewy, and Uwchmynydd, and Moelgwmguwch, and Castellgronwbefyrobenllyn; all within the limits of a shorter epistle than his. But the scenery of this shore compensates for the names. It is not only beautiful, but singular; and that singularity is here doubly striking, because it is utterly unlike to every thing else which occurs throughout the islands.

The character of the ground resembles much that of Loch Cateran; and these lochs only want trees to be often as beautiful. The mountains which bound them all are lofty, with rugged but graceful outlines; their surfaces

being uneven, and projecting every where in irregular and bold rocky precipices. Thus they descend to the very margin of the water, indenting its outline in an intricate manner, and forming innumerable bays, creeks, and promontories; every one of which presents a new picture, produced by fore-grounds that are ever varying, and that are always bold and full of character. In many places, being interspersed with rocks and islands, they present additional variety.

If the traveller regrets the want of wood, well may the proprietor of the soil do the same. That all these shores have once been covered with trees, is certain; nor are there any physical obstacles, on the eastern shore at least, which could not be overcome. Norway, with similar features, a worse exposure, and the same rocks, is covered with woods. But that country has never been denuded; and as an apology for the proprietors, who are here too often unjustly accused of neglect, it must be remembered that the creation of a forest from nothing, is a heavy and tedious task: its preservation is comparatively easy. In a country so thoroughly pastoral as this, nothing can be done without enclosure. This is a difficulty which, in most places, cannot be overcome, for want of capital to expend on improvements of which the returns are not immediate, and from the wants or habits of the proprietors, who are too often intent on procuring from the soil the utmost immediate rent which it can be made to yield. As a question of ornament, it is in vain to expect that those who do not reside on their estates, can take any great pleasure in planting them.

Yet I fear that the peculiar indolence of the Highland character must be considered among the obstacles: a moral one which time may overcome. Many islands are scattered about, that would require no enclosure; and there are many headlands and peninsular appendages,

the expense of enclosing which would be trifling, not only here, but in many other places. But indolence easily finds arguments for inactivity; and thus the proprietors would fain believe that the physical obstacles are insuperable: concealing from themselves those moral impediments which cannot be contemplated without self-accusation; like those who, in adversity, argue themselves into a belief of fatalism to quiet the remonstrances of their own reflections. The woods of the Highlands have been eradicated by the progress of civilization; and this is a case in which the first operations of improvement are always too active. But fresh views of rural economy are afterwards taken, and it is found necessary to plant where it was thought expedient to destroy, or where the process of destruction has been blindly pushed too far. Between these two stages, there is an interregnum of want and inconvenience, which is not easily overcome, and which is now felt, not only among the shelterless plains and naked valleys of the Islands, but in many parts of the mainland of Scotland. There, many enlightened and active persons have turned their attention to a branch of rural economy, which, in many situations, is particularly valuable, on account of the impossibility of deriving any other profit from the land. The example is spreading; but it is one of those which necessarily spreads slowly. In the Highlands, its progress will be still more difficult, as long as that indolence, already alluded to, so characteristic of the inferior classes, and from which I fear the superior are not exempt, shall remain. It is a disease however which promises to diminish daily, as the contamination of the general activity of Scotland is fast diffusing itself, even here. But, at present, in the remoter districts, and it is to these alone that such remarks are strictly applicable, a Highland gentleman is, in a proportional degree, as little anxious to multiply his enjoy-

ments or embellish his domains as his tenants, who are content to go on as their progenitors have done; disputing their own fireside with their own domestic animals, and enjoying that filth and smoke in which they have been born and bred.

It had become calm during the progress of our voyage; and the beauty of the sky, the brilliancy of the water, and the exquisite and varied air tints of the mountains, rendered the whole scenery which now surrounded us, as perfect as light and colour could have made it. As we drew near the point of Roneval, the sun was just beginning to decline behind the high mountains of Harris, and the broad shadows they threw over the sea, which reflected them like a mirror, were beautifully opposed to the brilliancy of the remainder, and to the fading gleams of yellow light that now tinged the high cliffs of the Shiant Isles and the lofty and distant mountains of Sky. The sea birds were skimming slowly over the surface as they flew home to their evening repose; and, following their example, we made the signal for our vessel, bade a final adieu to the Long Island, and returned to our own home on the deep.

Though this district is totally unknown to strangers, I know not where he who travels this country for mere amusement, could better spend two months; but they must be the months of summer, June and July; and he must not trust to the country for accommodation, which he will surely not find. Inns are rare and little frequented. There are few houses of the better class to which he might have recourse for hospitality, and the common people have not the means of affording it with any comfort. Neither can he trust to the boats of the country; and to men, as to horses, it is impracticable. Like the snail, he must carry his house on his back, and the waves must be his abode.

NORTH RONA. BARRA.

YEARS had passed in vain attempts, and still we had not reached North Rona. Nothing seemed to have been attained while that remained to be done. Like Pyrrhus, we were then to sit down to our wine and be happy. Such is happiness; always at the end of the rainbow; or like a pig with his tail greased, at a country fair; it may be apprehended, but still it escapes "sceleratus, vincula, Proteus." Nevertheless, we reached this long-sought land at last.

To Scotland at large, the very names of these islands were unknown: among the Western Isles, they were spoken of as we speak of the islands in the South Sea; remote lands, placed "in climes beyond the solar road," "far from the sun and summer gale;" objects in which no one could feel any interest. Nor could we discover aught of their history, except the general belief that they were inhabited by several families. The statistical writers had never heard of them; the map-makers had forgotten them, and the manufacturers of longitudes and latitudes had tabulated them, each according to his own fancy or belief. It was difficult to imagine that we were actually inquiring after an integrant portion of the British empire; and our intended visit was spoken of as we should have discussed an expedition to the dominions of Prester John, or a journey to investigate the sources of the Nile; countries placed where Homer has wisely placed his Elysian fields, and Swift his Laputa, about the *νείατα πείρατα γαίης*.

Our departure was taken from Cape Rath, and, long before evening, we had run the prescribed course; but no islands appeared. It was evident that the tables were incorrect: as we had kept an accurate reckoning. We stood, therefore, further to the north-west; but, after running some miles, and no land still appearing, we were obliged to heave to for the night. It seemed not a little extraordinary, that within a few miles of the continent of Britain, we had as much difficulty in finding two islands which must have been visible ten miles off, as if we had been exploring the seas of another hemisphere. We had looked for them, "come vecchio sartor fa nella cruna," in vain.

It is very likely that North Rona, and not Mann, was the island which was covered with a perpetual mist, so that no navigators could discover it; and that, probably, is the reason why the gentlemen who construct maps and charts to drown confiding sailors, and the parallel gentlemen who calculate latitudes and longitudes, could not find its place. Toland, indeed, who is such unquestionable authority, says, absolutely, that Mann was the island in question, and that the Enchanter was Mannanan, its King, who lived and reigned, and mistified his own kingdom, five centuries before Christ, and Mr. Toland's brain seventeen centuries after. Besides, he was son of King Lear; not Shakspeare's King Lear, but the god of the sea; or of Alladius, (for the herald's office and Mr. Toland doubt,) and was, furthermore, as great a navigator as Jason, and as sapient a lawyer as Tribonian. Others indeed say that "Mona, long hid from those who sail the main," was obfuscated by a Mermaid, in revenge of the slights of a lover. But a caliginous obnubilation adumbrates this intenebrated subject. If Collins and Toland do not agree, as little can we unfog the narrations of that great and incredulous historian, Procopius, and of that

concise and philosophical writer Plutarch. Every one knows that Ulysses went to a land situated no one knows where, covered with perpetual clouds, and never visited by the rays of the sun: the said Cimmerian, Cimbrian, or Celtic fog being produced by a witch, and the island being situated εἰς πείρατα ὠκεανοῖο. This must have been North Rona: because the geography is precise. If any doubt could exist of Homer's truth, the fact is confirmed by Isaac Tzetzes and Natalis Comes; profound and veracious authors both. Toland, however, thinks that this island also of Homer's, was the Isle of Mann; and thus we commentators disagree. An author more profound than all of us, has clearly demonstrated that both the Monæ are here implicated; and that one of them was the Elysian Fields, and the other the Fortunate Islands of the ancients. By what means Æneas contrived to find a subterranean passage from Italy to either of the Monæ, is not clearly explained; but it was probably generated by the branch of magic misletoe which Virgil plainly shows to have been at the bottom of the secret. I ought also to quote Pytheas, who does not romance at all; but if I quote him, I must quote the poetical geographer Scymnos, and so on, and there will be no end to my learning. Perhaps you think I am jesting all this time. If I do feel some compunction at putting on my paper what grave authors have gravely quoted as solid substantial learning, in quartos of no small weight, be assured there has been no jesting among them. I do assure you all this reading is very true and profound; but, unluckily for my reputation, it is not a treatise on the Titans, the Druids, or the gods of Samothrace; else I might have assumed "superbiam quæsitam meritis." It matters much, in these cases, "quid a quo dictum est"—and how, also.

But we must not forget our own island in this deep

search after that of Ulysses. Without doubt, North Rona must also have been the island where Plutarch tells us that Briareus kept Saturn bound in chains, under perpetual sleep. For this is the very Deucaledonian sea itself; and if he was chained in North Rona, the wisest thing he could do, was to sleep. Besides, this is amply confirmed, I mean the chaining of Saturn, by the Abbé Pezron, in his luminous history of the Titans. Unfortunately, there are here also, differences of opinion about the Saturnia regna, and about the geography, and the age, and the people, and the events, and a few other trifles. So difficult is it to withdraw the veil which conceals truth—or fable; 'tis all one. But then again it is all solved by the history of the Cabiri, or it will be in the next volume, or else by Mr. Davies, in what he chooses to call his Celtic Researches, or by the Hermes Scythicus, or by Bryant, or by somebody else; and if it is not all solved, so much the better, because we shall still have the pleasure of writing books so vastly learned and ingenious that we do not understand them ourselves; trusting, it is to be presumed, that the readers may have more wit. But to return to Plutarch.

This great man indeed tells us that all the desert isles of this sea were the habitations of Genii, and of the Spirits of heroes; of Fingal, Ossian, Carril, and Rhyno, it is probable; and thus the truth and antiquity of the poems of Ossian are confirmed. Hence, St. Kilda also may have had its share; so that I almost begin to fear that my own theory may lapse in the contest of learned opinions. For he assures us further, that Demetrius was sent by Claudius, or some one else, to these islands, and that some of them were called the islands of the Heroes. There must therefore have been more than one. Whether the Heroes and the Genii lived on the same islands, is left obscure. But Sertorius intended to go to one or other,

of them when he was driven out of Spain: which clearly demonstrates their existence. It was in the islands of the sacred people—Genii or Heroes? that, on certain occasions, whirlwinds and tempests arose; whereas at all other times there was perpetual summer, as in the Hyperborean islands under the North Pole. Perhaps these were both the same. But however that may be, the people informed Ulysses, or Abaris, or Pytheas, or Sertorius, or somebody else, that, on these occasions, one of their Gods had died; the commotion of the elements marking the period when he ceased to be. So that the gods of the Western, Deucaledonian, Fortunate, or Elysian islands were not immortal. The cause of these tempests is equally clear; for, says the philosophical and elegant Plutarch (excuse the Greek), "While these Gods are alive, they do good to mortals, as candles or lamps do; but when they go out, they expire with a stink, and the air becomes stormy and pestilential." Which is a very luminous explanation of the matter. As to Procopius, his geography and hydrography are somewhat puzzling, it must be owned, and I fear they will not suit North Rona. He is somewhat at odds with Plutarch, also, which is unlucky; for Cornwall and Wales must, according to him, have been the lands of the spirits; not the Æbudæ. Doubtless, it was a ghostly Proavus of O'Halloran's who told him that the Irish used, in those days, to be employed in ferrying over nightly boat-loads of souls to these Welsh fields of Elysium; heavy spirits, since they weighed down the boat to the water's edge, though invisible. The Irish Fileas have not been so successful in their audiences of late; or we might have hoped for better answers to the wicked doubts which such heretics as Ledwich have thrown on the history of the Milesians and the Pheni. With respect to this Irish ferry and this Welsh Elysium, the facts are, however,

incontrovertible, for they are recorded in choice Greek. It is unfortunate that I have not room to pursue this learning any further, since it is so very instructive. As to Homer, there can be no doubt of his truth, since his works are a body of all learning; and hence, whether it was St. Kilda, Mann, or North Rona, which was honoured with the presence of his hero, indubitably as ever Abaris [illegible] Apreece, and rode from Lewis to Greece on a golden arrow, did Ulysses pay a visit to the Elysium of Ossian's Ghosts. If there should be some slight difficulties as to the exact place, we must console ourselves with the reflection that future Tolands and Rowlands will hereafter dispute, when we are all dust and gas, on the exact geography of Lilliput, Lagado, and Balnibarbi; though surely no one will be so hardy as to doubt that Gulliver has told the truth as faithfully as Homer, Plutarch, Procopius, and the rest.

I trust that you are now satisfied that I have left no stone, no leaf I should say, unturned, to illustrate the ancient and genuine history of the Æbudæ, Hebudes, or Hebrides. I owed them this apology for the supercilious manner in which I had formerly treated their history before the first century; I owed it to my own reputation; and if this sketch is not of the most luminous, you must recollect that I have not room to make my light shine as it deserves. It would be hard that I should be condemned for not doing in a couple of pages, what my predecessors have taken hundreds for. There is no elbow room; it is, as if we should try to dance a minuet in a sentry box.

You shall not, at any rate, accuse me of not quoting my authorities in this important case, "la citacion de los autores, que los otros libros tienen, que en el vuestro os faltan;" as I have been told. You know how easy the matter is; "porque no habeis de hacer otra cosa que

buscar un libro que les acode todos;" if you could find one. You know also, I doubt not, the great man who has told us so. It is certainly an omission to be apologized for where it has happened; since, "quando no serva de otra cosa, por lo ménos servirá aquel largo catálogo de autores á dar de improviso autoridad al libro;" particularly in this instance of the islands of spirits and mists. As to the reasons on the opposite side, you must be satisfied, for the present, with those which he has given himself; as he is an authority which you, among all men, ought not to contest.

After all, which is the most idle pursuit; seeking for allegories in the puerile fables of Greece, or hunting after true history in the fictions and tales of infant nations. The chase has not even the merit of novelty. The innumerable offspring of Œdipus and Hermes, the Cabiri and the Bryants of our own day, are only the followers and imitators of the Platonists who have just gone before them; of Vossius, and Le Compte, and Kircher, and Bochart, and Marsham, and many more, themselves imitators of Philo and Eusebius, long ago. Nor is it only on these objects that fruitless and idle persons have exerted their fruitless talents, for want of better pursuits, and with fruitless results. The mysteries of Aristotle, of Pythagoras, Plato, Zoroaster, and Orpheus, the designed obscurities of those to whom mystery was a profitable trade, among whom it was the alchemy of the day, have equally found employment for ingenuity that might have been better occupied; and every man has discovered in them, as in the fables and mythologies of barbarism, precisely what he wished to find. The Revelations have not been a more fertile source for endless application among dreaming mystics. We may find whatever we choose; in etymology, as in every thing else. As historians discover history, so theologians have found

theology, and alchemists their own secrets, in the Greek mythology, and even in the very Revelations. Eustathius, and Suidas after him, have determined, that the Golden Fleece of Jason was a parchment book, disclosing the art of making gold. The hieroglyphics have contained every possible thing in rotation, till Dr. Young has at length shown that they probably contain nothing. It is the previous disease of the mind that makes its own food in this case, and that discovers, even among the "arcana arcanorum omnium arcanissima," precisely what it wishes. But, enough of this.

Grieved that I cannot further elucidate the ancient history of North Rona, I must proceed to vulgar matters. In the night, the tide had set us far to the northward, and as the sun rose, land was discovered from the cross-trees. By mid-day we were abreast of Rona; and making an observation for its latitude, I found that it was about thirteen miles to the north of the assigned place; an amusing illustration of the geographical pursuits of a nation which had explored half the seas of the globe, and was then engaged in hunting after northwest passages and Polar basins. We found considerable difficulty in landing; the only landing place being the face of a rocky cliff, fifty or sixty feet high, and there being a considerable swell, with a smart breeze. But having been well trained to this service in our geological pursuits, we at length succeeded, at the risk of ourselves and our boat also. If you doubt whether it requires some training, to find yourself on the top of a swell at the summit of a cliff, and then, in an instant, again at its foot, then to watch for some projecting rock on which you may jump out, taking care to calculate the exact place and distance of your own moving self and the point in question, you may try.

The first objects we saw as we reached the surface of

of the cliff, were a man and a boy, who, with a dog, were busily employed in collecting and driving away a small flock of sheep. No houses were visible; but, a little further off, we perceived two women, each loaded with a large bundle, who seemed to have arisen out of the ground, and were running with all speed towards the northern side of the island. It was plain that they had taken us for pirates or Americans; as it was probable they knew little of the state of foreign affairs: but a friendly hail in Gaelic from one of our Argyll men, soon made the shepherd and his boy bring to. Credentials having been regularly exchanged on both sides, we proceeded to examine the natural history while it was fair; as the political investigations might be carried on in the weather of which there was an impending prospect.

This little island appears to be somewhat more than a mile long, and about half a mile broad, where widest; though that extreme breadth arises from a point which projects to the northward so as to interfere with its prolonged oval shape. The southern cliffs range from thirty to sixty feet in height, running out into flat ledges at the western extremity; but, on the north side, they reach to five hundred, and presented a formidable aspect as we saw them, whitened by the breach of the long swell that rolled in from the northward. Here, among other openings, there is one immense cave, with a wide aperture, and probably of considerable depth, as it appeared black as night. The sea broke within it with the noise of thunder; every wave rebounding in a sheet of green foam, till, meeting a fresh sea, it recoiled again, dashing the white spray high against the darkening sky, which was covered with the bright wings of a thousand sea fowl whom our presence had driven from their nests.

The breach of the sea on the western angle of this island, must be tremendous in winter. Over a large

space, the whole ground, at an elevation of two hundred feet, was washed away to the bare foundation; large masses of rock being frequently thrown up, and carried high along the level land, as if they had been mere pebbles on a sea beach. The shepherd informed us that his sheep fold, which seemed secure enough to our eyes, was often washed clean away; the whole conveying an idea of the height and force of the waves, of which it would have been otherwise impossible to have formed any conception. Rona can be no peaceful solitude when the half of it is thus under water; and the solid breach of the sea then made against its bows, (in sea phraseology), must cover the whole, in gales of wind, with a continual shower of spray. From this lower western angle, the land rises with a gentle and even swell towards the north and east; but having no inequality of ground to afford the least shelter, it is necessarily swept by every blast. The surface is, nevertheless, green, and every where covered with a beautiful compact turf; except where it is broken up for cultivation, for the space of a few acres in the middle and elevated part.

The highest point is near the north-eastern end; and hence, in clear weather, the lofty hills of Sutherland are visible in the horizon. But that does not often happen in this territory of the waves and winds; nor could the lower land of Lewis be seen. It can afford little consolation to the Captain of Rona that his consort Barra sails in the same fleet; as, at the distance of ten miles, it takes little from the solitude of his own domain. Surely if aught on earth, or rather on sea, can convey the complete feeling of solitude and desertion, it is Rona. Ten minutes were well spent in sitting alone on the highest point of this spot in the ocean, where nothing was to be seen around but sea and sky, and in indulging day dreams of abandonment and despair, such as those

of Ariadne or Alexander Selkirk. But Naxos is a Paradise, compared to Rona. Here, as I lay listening to the roaring of the wind and sea, and the cries of the gulls as they flew past, it required no great effort of imagination to figure to myself the shipwrecked seaman despairing of relief, and envying those whose fears and hopes alike were ended. Awaking from his sleep, he imagines he hears the crowing of the cock in his native cottage; but he finds that it is the scream of the sea fowl, and looks from his hopeless rock on the wild sea and the wilder sky, despairing of another day.

It is the total seclusion of Rona from all the concerns of the world, which confers on it that intense character of solitude with which it seemed to impress us all. No ship approaches in sight; seldom is land seen from it. In the most solitary lighthouse, the idea of society, of communication, is maintained by the daily occupation of feeding and trimming that guiding star which leads others to think of the hermit whose task it is to tend the friendly lamp. In a ship, though alone, there is a prospect, a possibility of return to society. Hope never leaves the vessel while yet she can float; but Rona is forgotten, unknown, for ever fixed, immoveable, in the dreary and waste ocean.

As to Kenneth Mac Cagie, he and Aristotle must settle whether he was a "Deus" or a "Demon." "Upon this isle whereas he had abode, Nature, God knows, had little cost bestowed;" but he had little time and less inclination to moralize on his island, or upon solitude, its charms or its pains; and having moralized myself into a resolution to write a romance, till I recollected that I had been forestalled by Robinson Crusoe, I joined the palaver, which was now assembled at his abode, from which I extracted all the political information that related to this territory.

We learned that we had been misinformed respecting

Barra: it never had been inhabited; nor indeed was that possible, as we afterwards discovered. At some former period, as we were told, Rona had contained five families; until an unfortunate accident produced a revolution in the island. They had possessed a boat, which they contrived to house in some cranny on the southern point; but in attempting to land, on some stormy day, all the men were drowned. Rona thus became deserted; and, falling into the hands of a tacksman in Lewis, to which estate it belongs, was put under the present system. Such was the traditional history of North Rona, according to Kenneth Mac Cagie; who united in his own person, the various offices of feudal sovereign, vassal, serf, and historiographer, besides many more. I ought not to have doubted Kenneth's tradition; because tradition is a touchy sort of personage; generally claiming implicit faith for itself, and commonly also relying on the strength of Lord Peter's argument. He always reminds me of the gentleman called Ouï-dire, "qui avoit la gueule fendue juses aulx aureilles, dedans la gueule sept langues, et chasque langue fenduë en sept parties;" while the audience "devenoient clercs et scavants en peu d'heures, et parloient de choses prodigieuses, elegamment et par bonne memoire." I have a right however to doubt in this case; having authority against authority; Martin and Sibbald against Mac Cagie; and as the history of this minutest of tributary kingdoms deserves at least as much respect as that of St. Marino, the most microscopic of republics, I must give it you. I have had no great opportunity as yet of showing my talents as a historian.

In the year 1670, or thereabouts, North Rona was possessed by five families, each having its dwelling-house, barn, storehouse, and cattle-house. The houses then were built with stones and thatched with straw; but whether built under ground or above ground, this

recorder says not. As they divided the land, so they allotted the sea; each adhering rigidly to its divisions in this Mare Clausum. In those days also, they possessed the gift of the second sight, and saluted strangers by turning round them in the direction of the sun, and blessing them; a rite palpably derived from the religion of the Magi, and confirming the probability of their descent from Saturn and Briareus. Then also there was a chapel dedicated to St. Ronan, (the patron saint of seals,) which was fenced by a stone wall, and swept every day. The altar was a plank of wood, ten feet in length, having a stone placed in a hole at each end, and these being possessed of many virtues; among which, the most conspicuous was that of promoting delivery. In this chapel, divine service, consisting of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments, was performed every Sunday morning. So far Martin; but Sir Robert Sibbald, or Sir George Mackenzie, (which is the same thing,) says that they performed the service two or three times a day, and had a Romish hereditary priest. Thus great historians differ; and who shall reconcile them. That I may terminate the ecclesiastical portion of the history at once, I must add, from Dean Monro, that, when any man died, they were in the habit of leaving a spade and shovel in the chapel, and that, on the morrow, they found the place of his grave marked out.

The present political condition of North Rona is as simple as a monarchy which has no subjects can well be; but in the days of yore, it seems to have been somewhat more refined. The five families always contained thirty individuals, and there were always six to each family. So says Sir George Mackenzie; and he was a lawyer and a government lawyer; consequently, to be believed. The preservation of this nice balance of population is a matter with which Plato and Aristotle have puzzled themselves

woefully: the North Ronenses found no difficulty, although Malthus had not in those days become an object of attack for those who began by not comprehending him, subsided in not believing him, and ended in teaching him what he had been labouring so hardly and so long to teach them. The children were equally divided among all the families; and when the number exceeded thirty, the surplus was sent off to Lewis, to Seaforth, the proprietor and chief. It is not stated exactly how an eventual deficiency was made up; but it must be supposed that the deal board with the two stones was an agent in this part of the business. The whole system is well deserving of commentaries, which, in these happy days, when political economy and population are taught to young masters and misses by question and answer, I need not waste on it. I may only add, with respect to the ancient political constitution of North Rona, that as Sir George calls it a commonwealth in one place, and then mentions that there was a Chief, it was probably a sort of federal republic, like America, or else resembled the Republic of Rome under Nero, or that of France under the First Consul; or, what is still more likely, some of the constitutions of Jeremy Bentham, or the Abbé Sieyes.

I am grieved to impeach the veracity of Kenneth Mac Cagie's tradition; but the decline and fall of the Empire, or Commonwealth, of Rona, must be attributed to the following causes, on Martin's credit. The pen of Montesquieu would have been required to do justice to the subject.

In the year 1686, the rats arrived in such abundance that they ate up all the corn; and, as misfortunes never come single, some seamen landed and stole the bull. The cows, upon this, very properly, refused to give milk; and, as if the fall of Rona had been inevitably decreed,

the usual supplies from Lewis were interrupted for a twelvemonth, so that all the people died. If true, there is somewhat of the pathetic in this tale of Martin's, where he says that the Steward of St. Kilda, having been driven here by stress of weather, found, among other matters, a woman lying dead with a dead child at her breast. Another colony, however, it is said, was sent afterwards; so that, possibly, my friend Kenneth's story may refer to this latter empire, and his credit will thus remain unimpeached.

This tenant is, properly speaking, a cottar, as he cultivates the farm on his employer's account. There seemed to have been six or seven acres cultivated this year, in barley, oats, and potatoes; but the grain was now housed. The soil is good, and the produce appeared to have been abundant. The family is permitted to consume as much as they please; and it was stated that the average surplus, paid to the tacksman, amounted to eight bolls of barley. In addition to that, he was bound to find an annual supply of eight stone of feathers; the produce of the gannets. Besides all this, the island maintained fifty small sheep. The wool of these was, of course, reserved for the tacksman; but, as far as we could discover, Kenneth was as unrestricted in the use of mutton as in that of grain and potatoes. Whether within his charter or not, we neither asked nor cared; but he made no scruple of selling us a sheep, nor did we any where procure better mutton: not often any so good. There was not much danger to the tacksman, of his transgressing materially in these dealings; as, excepting one or two visits from the boats of the Fortunée, while employed in cruising after the President in 1812, we understood that he had, for seven years, seen no human beings but ourselves and the people of his employer. Twice in the year, that part

of the produce which is reserved, is thus taken away; and in this manner is maintained all the communication which North Rona has with the external world.

The return for all these services, in addition to his food and that of his family, was the large sum of two pounds a year. But this was paid in clothes, not in money; and as there were six individuals to clothe, it is easy to apprehend that they did not abound in covering. I must add to this, however, the use of a cow, which was brought from Lewis when in milk, and exchanged when unserviceable. From the milk of his sheep he contrived to make cheeses, resembling those for which St. Kilda is so celebrated. Those who have eaten of them will be warrants for their goodness. We might have expected that the use of money would almost have been forgotten here, where there was nothing which it could purchase. But after all, it speaks a language which all understand; nor did we find but that Kenneth Mac Cagie was fully as well aware of the value of his commodities as if he had been an inhabitant of Stornoway itself. He seemed thoroughly to understand "Del no, per li denar, vi si fa ita." His extra civilities we repaid with all the tobacco in our possession: a present far more gratifying, we doubted not, than a few additional shillings, which he could have converted to no immediate use.

Whatever might be judged of this cottar's bargain, that of his superior was undoubtedly a good one; as the rent which he paid for the island was but two pounds a year: his other farms were not so profitable by a great deal. No boat was allowed; properly enough; since it could only offer the poor man a temptation to drown himself; but, by means of his fishing rod, he could both add to his food and vary it, chiefly with coal fish, which were easily caught from the rocks. We discovered that he

was bound by an indenture for eight years; a superfluous precaution for a man who was already secured by a barrier as unsurmountable as the nine chains of Styx.

There is no peat in the island, but its place was well enough supplied by turf; and the piles of stacks among which our palaver was held, proved that the most necessary article of winter stores had not been neglected. For water, they were obliged to have recourse to pools in the rocks, which were filled occasionally by the rain; a precarious supply in any other land but this; where, probably, the "rain it raineth every day." We were amused with one trait of improvidence, quite characteristic of a Highlander. The oil of the coal fish served for light, and a "kindling turf" preserved the fire during the night; but had that fire been extinguished, "but once put out that light," no provision was at hand for rekindling it, nor could it be restored till the Lewis boat should return: probably not even then; unless his ancient god, Bel, had descended in a meteor for that purpose. A winter in this northern region, without fire or light, was a prospect which might well make the Vestals who tended them, watch the smoking embers and trim the dying lamp. Mac Cagie only shrugged his shoulders at the suggestion of a flint and steel; he had lived seven years without one. His family consisted of two boys, the eldest of which assisted his father in the farm, an infant, a wife, who also took her share in the labour, and an aged and deaf mother who watched the child and the interior economy. Thus the labour of three individuals, for which also there was abundant occupation, was repaid by the food of the whole, and by the scanty proportion of clothes by which they were, literally, not covered. The younger child and the woman, had, for clothing, something in the shape of a blanket, the ancient covering, apparently, of their race, but scarcely suffi-

cient for the most indispensible purposes; the males were better dressed. However, I satisfied myself that it was as good a Toga as Cato wore, and was content.

There is much virtue in a word, as I dare say I have remarked before. The Highlanders choose to be angry now, because we tell them, (somebody at least does so,) that their heroic ancestry had no covering but a dirty blanket. But if Fingal had no other dress for his days of peace, he was fully as heroically clothed as the Gens Togata itself. If that blanket descended to John Lord of the Isles, or to all the Johns and the Donalds of the Clan Colla, and to all their myrmidons, even down to the last century, call it a Toga, and Cicero himself was no better dressed. That the Blanket of Cato, and Pompey, and Marc Antony, and Coriolanus, was not often washed, is very clear; so that, there also, the Highlanders may boast of their heroism. If it had, it would not have kept out the Malaria, as Signor Brocchi has proved; besides which, since it was really white, or whitened by the fullones, when the Candidati thought it proper to appear in their best, it is pretty clear that a clean blanket was a mark of distinction. Since the Highlanders are anxious to derive their dress from the Romans, and as I would not allow them the kilt formerly, I hope they will accept of the Toga as a substitute and an apology.

But as Kenneth and all his family were amply supplied with food, they were fat, and must therefore be considered as rich people; as being far wealthier in fact, than the great proportion of small Highland tenants; infinitely more so than those of Barra and Benbecula. The wife and mother looked as wretched and melancholy as Highland wives and mothers generally do; but Mac Cagie himself seemed a good humoured careless fellow, little concerned about to-morrow, and fully occupied in hunting his sheep about the island. There are not many places

where such an island would not have been left to its proper tenants, the gulls and gannets; and none but an insular Highlander who could have been found to undertake such an occupation.

During the long discussions whence all this knowledge was procured, I had not observed that our conference was held on the top of the house; roof it could not be called. The whole spot seemed to consist of an accumulation of turf stacks; and, on the lowest of these, we thought ourselves stationed. It was the house itself. Not even the solid mounds of stone that form the walls of a Highland hut, could resist the winds of this boisterous region; for where the sea spared the sheep folds, the gales blew them down. This habitation had, therefore, been excavated in the earth, as if it had been the work of Greenlanders; nor could its existence have been suspected by a casual visitor, among the dunghills and turf stacks by which it was surrounded. The very entrance seemed to have been contrived for a concealment or defence that surely could not be necessary; as no enemies were likely to be tempted to assault North Rona: but it was probably calculated to prevent the access of the winds, since it is also an Icelandic fashion. What there was of wall, rose for a foot or two above the surrounding irregular surface, and the stacks of turf helped to ward off the violence of the gales. The flat roof was a solid mass of turf and straw; the latter hardly to be called thatch; and the smoke, as usual, issued out of an aperture near the side of the Troglodyte habitation. We could not perceive the entrance till it was pointed out. This was an irregular hole, about four feet high, surrounded by turf; and, on entering it, with some precaution, we found a long tortuous passage, somewhat resembling the gallery of a mine, but without a door, which conducted us into the penetralia of this cavern.

As this resembled the houses of the Esquimaux, it is not unlikely also to be the subterranean house of Tacitus, quoted in speaking of North Uist.

The interior resembled the prints which we have seen of a Kamschatkan hut. Over the embers of a turf fire, sat the ancient grandmother nursing the infant, which was nearly naked. From the rafters hung festoons of dried fish; but scarcely an article of furniture was to be seen, and there was no light but that which came through the smoke-hole. There was a sort of platform, or dais, on which the fire was raised, where the old woman and her charge sat; and one or two niches, excavated laterally in the ground, and laid with ashes, seemed to be the only bed places. Why these were not furnished with straw, I know not; and, of blankets, the provision was as scanty as that of the clothes. Possibly, ashes may make a better and softer bed than straw; but it is far more likely that Kenneth Mac Cagie and his family could not be fashed to make themselves more comfortable. Whatever the fact be, this was precisely the bed which Jocelin tells us that St. Kentegern used; a stone tomb laid with ashes. Whether Kenneth of Rona had copied St. Kentegern, or had inherited the bed of a former saint, or of St. Ronan himself, I leave to you to discover. The difficulty of carrying on complicated investigations through the means of interpreters, is sufficient at all times to excuse greater omissions than you will find in the history of this State.

That cause operated especially in preventing us from forming very clear notions about their moral situation; their own feelings, and wishes, and wants. This was a variety in human life worth studying; but our studies evaporated in little more than empty speculation; as those of others have done before on more momentous points. Every thing appeared wretched enough; a climate where winter never dies; a smoky subterranean

cavern; rain and storm; a deaf octagenarian grandmother; the wife and children half naked; and, to add to all this, solitude, and a prison from which there was no escape. Yet they were well fed, seemed contented, and little concerned what the rest of the world was doing. To tend the sheep and house the winter firing; to dig the ground and reap the harvest in their seasons; to hunt wild fowl and catch fish; to fetch water from the pools, keep up the fire, and rock the child on their knees to sleep, seemed occupation enough, and the society of the family itself, society enough. The women and children, indeed, had probably never extended their notions of a world much beyond the precincts of North Rona, and the chief seemed to have few cares or wishes that did not center in it. If man is a gregarious animal, it is only by cultivation that he learns to delight in extended society. Kenneth had few ideas to communicate; and his family, apparently, had none at all. And after all, as Montaigne says, "Sur le plus beau trône du monde on n'est jamais assis que sur son cul."

We were desirous of knowing whether he meant to renew his engagement, as seven years of it were now expired. But on this head he did not seem to have made up his mind. All that we could discover, was a desire to go to Lewis to christen his infant. In another year, his wish will have been gratified. I shall never know the event; for assuredly, in leaving North Rona, I have left it for ever; but I shall be much surprised if some future visitor does not find Kenneth, twenty years hence, wearing out his old age in the subterranean retreat of his better days.

"But the weary wind began to rise, and the sea began to rout." It was time to think of leaving a place where a few hours of neglect might have detained us the whole winter. The charms of pensive contemplation would have been dearly purchased by a few months residence in

North Rona, even in the bosom of mother earth and the society of the Mac Cagies. It was not too soon; and it had become a more difficult task than before, to bring our boat up to the cliffs. We began to think that we must leave our sheep behind; for how it was to be carried down the face of the rocks, none of us could discover. But Kenneth had been used to this department of his trade; and tying the hind legs of the animal together, he contrived to descend with it suspended round his neck; with the pleasing alternative of being strangled or drowned, had his foot slipped. I made a narrow escape, myself, of visiting the bottom of "the monstrous world," by the sheering off of the boat as I was jumping in. I might now have been sleeping as sound as Saturn himself.

We stood away for Barra, which lies about ten miles to the westward. It is a double rock, rising to the height of perhaps 300 feet above the water, and is not habitable: so much for common fame. There are two cairns on it, erected by the men who are sent in the season to collect the feathers, as it is one of the great resorts of the gannet. To the northward, it is grassy and sloping, but the southern face is precipitous. It is also known by the name of Sulisker, the sail rock. The sea ran so high on it that we found it impossible, even to attempt landing, and therefore bore up for Lewis; proud of the success of an expedition of which we had so long despaired. As to the North Rona cheeses, they were worth a voyage to North Rona. But I hope somebody will explain how it happened that, having been taken in the state of curd out of the salt water, and placed straightway in new casks just out of the cooper's hands, with all the seams well pitched, they were half devoured by mites when they arrived at their destination. The spontaneous-generation-men will find no difficulty; and assuredly this is as much like it as any case that could well be imagined.

THE SHIANT ISLES. FOOD OF THE HIGHLANDS.

In the first voyage which I made on this north-west coast, I had laboured hard for a whole day to reach these islands: but the wind was foul, night came on, and my head was so full of the Shiant fairies that I could not sleep. When I dozed, it was to dream of yellow sands; and as the sea gull flew screaming past, I thought I heard "the voice of Chanticleer." At three in the morning, I was roused by the cry, "put down the helm, haul the foresheet to windward, let fly the jib sheet, lower away the boat." It blew fresh and was scarcely light: the water and the sky were all one cloudy, grey, cold, and dreary chaos; the morning wind whistled bleak in the rigging, and the white seas were foaming past. The expedition did not look tempting; but I had given the orders to look out, and I now saw the dark mass of the Shiant rocks gleaming through the dim haze, and marked below by a long line of breakers. We landed with difficulty, and had just time to open our eyes, when it became a matter of prudence to haul off again. So at least the seamen thought; but I am not quite sure that some expectation of water spirits or goblins, wandering under the high cliffs that rose dark above us in the twilight grey of the morning, had not as much influence over their resolutions as the black clouds which were now gathering fast to windward, and the roar of the sea that was foaming all along this wild shore. But four years had past away. The waves that were then breaking white against its cliffs, were rippling on the pebbled

beach, as if it was impossible they ever could be angry again; the wind was hushed, the sky was blue, and the long grass hung motionless from the rocks above. We landed once more on the same spot, but all was solitude and silence: the green transparent wave curled gently on the shore, and the angry spirits of the deep had retired to their green caves below. Thus, at least, I conjectured; for there was a whispering and mysterious air among the men, as if they feared again to waken the dusky forms that rouse the boiling waves with their dark wings.

But they and I had been alike mistaken in our expectations: they of fairies, and I of fairy land. The term Shiant is of wide application; and though bestowed on a lake which is the haunt of the gentler spirits of the air and water, in Sky, it seems to have been conferred on these islands merely from their having once possessed a religious monastic establishment. There are three islands, besides some detached rocks, disposed in the form of a triangle; two of them, Eilan na Kily and Gariveilan, being connected by a neck of pebbles that is seldom covered, unless in a high tide and a stormy sea. Eilan Wirrey lies detached, at the distance of about half a mile. The two former appear to be, each, about two miles in circuit, the latter about one; and the whole form a single sheep farm, tended by a solitary family that resides on Eilan na Kily. They are verdant, being entirely covered with long rich grass; offering a delicious solitude, if suns would always shine and seas were always calm. If the Highland sea-fairies had been desirous of a maritime kingdom for themselves, I know not where they could have chosen a better.

Gariveilan, which is the most conspicuous of the group, is 530 feet high, by barometric measurement. To the eastward it runs out into a long narrow ridge,

which is bounded on each side by perpendicular but rude cliffs, fifty or sixty feet in height. The main part of the island is a round hill, very difficult of access, terminating on all sides in columnar rocks of various altitude, and intermixed, on the east, with grassy slopes and fragments of fallen columns. To the north, it presents a long extended line of columnar cliffs; reaching in a gentle curve to 1000 yards, or more, and impending, with its perpendicular face and broad mass of shadow, over the dark deep sea that washes its base. The height of this range varies from 300 to 400 feet; and it thus forms one of the most magnificent colonnades to be found among the Western Islands. But these islands are no where more striking than when viewed at a sufficient distance from the northward; the whole of this lofty range of pillars being distinctly seen rising like a long wall out of the sea; varied by the ruder forms of the others which tower above or project beyond them, and contrasted by the wild rocks which skirt the whole group. If this scene has not the variety of Staffa, it exceeds it, at least in simplicity and grandeur of effect, as much as it does in magnitude; but, lying beyond the boundary of ordinary travels, it is still unknown. Yet these columns, though scarcely less regular than those of Staffa, do not produce the same architectural effect, in consequence of their great height. Being six times as long, and not of much larger dimensions, they do not resemble artificial pillars in their proportions; while the distance required for viewing the whole cliff to advantage, also renders them necessarily indistinct. I might add to this, that they want the contrast which is produced at Staffa by the rude mass of superincumbent rock; and that, from their great length, they are rarely continuous throughout, so that their approach to the artificial character is further

diminished by fractures and interruptions. But these are not defects: they are rather sources of variety.

The projecting point already mentioned, aids the general effect, and is productive of much variety by combining with the surrounding scenery, and as serving, by its rudeness, to contrast with the regularity of the columnar cliffs. It is perforated by an arch of considerable dimensions, which affords a very striking object. This opening seems to be about forty or fifty feet broad, and as much in height; the length appearing to exceed an hundred feet. At one end, the entrance is supported by two detached columns of rock; producing a piece of rude natural architecture, no less elegant in disposition than remarkable in its effect, whether viewed from without or within. We hesitated at the entrance; but the tide was rushing through with such violence, that before we could resolve whether we should attempt to pass it or not, the current seized on the boat and carried us before it like an arrow. The velocity with which we entered this dark and narrow passage, the shadowy uncertainty of forms half lost in its obscurity, the roar of the sea as it boiled and broke along like a mountain torrent, and the momentary uneasiness which every such hazardous attempt never fails to produce, rendered the whole scene poetically terrific. As we emerged from the darkness of this cavern, we shot far away beyond the cliffs, whirled in the foaming eddies of the contending streams of tide. As I turned to look back through the surge, at the dark opening of what might well have been supposed the northern Nastranda, never probably before passed, I could not help thinking of the great poet who "si volse indietro a rimirar lo passo che non lascia giammai persona viva."

Eilan Wirrey is, by itself, scarcely a picturesque

object, the columnar faces being here diminished in length by some rude rocks that skirt their feet; nor is there any thing very striking in the forms of its cliffs. On the western side of Eilan na Kily, the shore is low and rocky: but on the opposite quarter it is bounded by columnar cliffs. These, however grand, are eclipsed by the superior beauties of Gariveilan; yet they afford some fine scenes, enlivened by the myriads of sea fowl, which in these islands, as at Ailsa, almost deafen the spectator with their ceaseless clamour, and darken the air with their flight. It was impossible here not to think of Virgil's lively description of the flight of sea birds; so exactly do they resemble a cloud of leaves scattered by an autumnal storm.

A ruinous square enclosure, the remains of a house, lies on the western side of this island, whence its name—the Island of the Cell. The smallness of this building renders it probable that it was really the cell of some ascetic monk, or hermit; personages which are known to have existed in several parts of the Western Islands. But it may have been the chapel; as Martin says that there was one here dedicated to the Virgin. That many of these establishments, perhaps all, were dependant on Iona, is more than probable; and some of them still, perhaps, prove it, from their being dedicated to St. Columba. But it does not appear that the principle of solitary retirement formed any part of Columba's own rules; and it is more probable that all these outstanding establishments were dependencies on that monastery, after it had fallen into the possession of the Romish regular clergy. This supposition is indeed confirmed by the want of marks of high antiquity in the buildings that remain; and, in many cases, as in St. Cormac's Isle and others, by architectural evidence still more unquestionable. These hermits appear to have remained, in some

places, in the islands, even long after the Reformation; and, if traditions are to be believed, they sometimes inhabited caves; the rudeness of their dress and manners corresponding to that of their dwellings. Martin, whose account of the Isles was published about the beginning of the eighteenth century, has described one whom he saw in Benbecula; and this specimen, of whom he has given a detailed account, was probably among the last of his order. If the rooks did not all fly away when the nests were pulled down, there was little temptation to endure the hardships of a hermit's life when it could no longer command respect or confer influence.

We paid a visit to the shepherd, whose house we found, like that of all his countrymen, little calculated for elegant retirement at least; his arrangements, as usual, being such as neither to allow him to enjoy the advantages in his reach, nor to ward off the evils to which he was exposed. But, content, they say, makes every thing, be that what it may, the most convenient and the best. It may be so; but we turn, nevertheless, with disgust, from filth and darkness, and the more so when they are not necessary, when they might be avoided or remedied; nor is it easy to feel, argue as we may, that happiness, that any other happiness at least than that of a hog, can be found in the midst of privations and inconveniences, which the slightest exertion would remove. Turning from the loveliness of nature, from the bright sand, and the fair rock, the enamelled green turf, and the sweetness of the summer breeze, it is difficult to view these things without a feeling of somewhat like anger at the barbarism which is placed amidst bounties and beauties that it will not enjoy.

I would excuse my good friends, if poverty and inability were the cause. But cleanliness and order cost nothing. They are of no expense, at least to those

whose time is unoccupied. Did they trench on profitable industry, we might find an excuse for such neglect. Nor can these people plead want of dexterity. Though every Highlander must be his own architect, the talent which can build his hut, might make it square, and spacious, and neat. Want of room is one great cause of disorder; and he need not want that, since he has both space and materials at command. If his birch rafter will not give him a wider roof, it would give him two. His floor need not be of mud; it need not, at least, be a collection of hill and dale. Nor need the outside be a collection of pools, and rubbish, and dirt, through which he can scarcely gain access to his door. His windows may admit more light, and light is a standing enemy to disorder and squalidity. It is said that he cannot even afford a pane of glass. Occasionally, that may happen; but it is rare; and assuredly when he has procured it, he is little careful of it, and will scarcely be at the trouble of replacing it when broken. I should be sorry indeed, to think that he is often so poor; but I am very sure he has no ambition to possess a better house, or more comforts. It would be no heavy tax on the landholder, if, furnishing nothing towards the farm house, he were to furnish this much, compelling the tenant to maintain it; it is little less than a duty to see that his people possess all the comforts which, in their present state of privation, are accessible.

There is nothing so easy, as to argue that he is the fittest judge of his own wishes and happiness in this case; and that his contentment is more valuable to him than damask and ivory, purple and gold. The quality of this contentment is not of a good kind. And if the house and its concomitants are not the cause of many of the existing collateral evils connected with want of industry, it is very certain that they are indications and proofs of

indolence. It is vain to talk of the industry of him who will not be at the trouble to make his own habitation better than that of his pigs and cattle. In the days of Polydore Virgil, the houses of even the Low Country Scots, were built of the branches of trees and clay, and the door was a cow hide. What the people of Scotland were then, may be found in history; and had their houses not assumed a different complexion, they would have remained in the same heroic and contented state still.

All these remarks, and many similar, may appear trifling; they may appear censorious. They are neither the one nor the other. Their only object is a hope of increasing the happiness of these neglected and neglectful people, by pointing out what they can do for themselves, and what can be done for them. There is no affectation of philanthropy; a virtue, as the Prince de Ligne well says, so strange and rare, that we have been obliged to invent a Greek term for it. It is vain to say, that, not knowing these comforts, they do not feel their want. The same argument would apply to any attempt to raise man from his savage state, to teach him the arts of civilization. The same argument would apply against the giving a Highlander education; to every thing. We render them a service if we show them comforts which they never knew; and it is our duty to better the condition of all, where it is in our power. Nor is it possible to do this without pointing out the faults and the defects. Those who are angry because such things are pointed out, are of the race who would rather persist in wrong than mend; because, to repent, or to change, is to acknowledge a fault. If this "philanthropy" is destined to add to my other crimes against this sensitive country, it will be nothing new. The praise, as every one knows, will make no impression on the other balance; partly be-

cause it is taken as a right, and partly because "meminit libentius illud, Quod quis deridet quam quod probat et veneratur."

But so catenated are all human improvements, such is the connexion between the greater and the smaller virtues, that many other valuable advantages must flow from increasing, even the petty comforts of the Highlanders. We may call these luxuries, if we choose: but he who shall teach the Highlander to desire luxury, will render him one of the greatest benefits of which he is at present susceptible. This is to rouse that industry which is dormant for want of motives or desires: and that industry, once roused, will be directed to objects more valuable than squaring the walls of his dingy hut and levelling his mud floor. We may smile, if we please, at a new Sutherland Highlander spending his money in caraway comfits and gingerbread kings. But the principle is a valuable one; and even these kings must lead to good. If it may be painful to tempt him with the sight of luxuries which he cannot purchase, that temptation is the very road to exertion. Trifling as it may seem, it was an additional pleasure, some years ago, to those who expected to reform Donald by the influence of gingerbread royalty, to see oranges hawked about a country where the existence of such a thing had never been imagined, and where the astonishment they excited may easily be conceived. If he chooses now to feed on oatmeal and potatoes, because he despises the luxury of a garden, or the poultry which is walking before his door, we may praise his simplicity and his contentment; but we must condemn also while we praise. If additional exertion in raising potatoes, would enable him to fatten a fowl for his own Sunday dinner, as it often will, we ought to desire, like Henry IV, that every Highlander might have his "poularde au pot" on that day, since the good effects will not cease there. We may

laud his temperance: I have lauded it: but I would almost consent to see him as fond of whisky as he is reputed once to have been, if, by his own increased exertions, he could procure the means of drinking it.

It was Chrysippus who said, first of course, and therefore before Dr. Pangloss, that there was a φυσικὴ σύνταξις τῶν ὅλων; and as the concatenation of things has brought me once more to the business of eating, which, some how or other, proves to be the end and object of most dissertations, I may as well pursue the subject a little further, if not "ab ovo usque ad mala."

To begin with bread, as the staff of life, and to take no notice of the beauty and novelty of the metaphor, the people of the Highlands, in general, and with reason, prefer oatbread to barley; and it is only in St. Kilda that I have seen the latter prevail. When this is made into thick cakes, as is the usual mode, it is a very heavy and tenacious substance, and, to strangers, unpalatable. The thin cake, made of fine barley meal, is, on the contrary, a delicacy; but one, that is only met with at good tables. England might borrow from its neighbours, both the barley scon and the oatcake. The latter, in particular, though a standing subject of ridicule among the English, is far superior to the vile invention used in Cornwall, called barley bread, or even to the wheaten bread of the lower classes in Wales and in other remote parts. Compared to the general bread of the poor on the continent of Europe, at least in the northern division, it is an absolute luxury. I cannot, however, speak in praise of the pease bannock, which is occasionally met with in the Highlands. It seems to me abominable; as is a cake which I have also sometimes seen, made from potatoes. Nature seems to have ordained this root to foil the cooking animal and all his cookery; though old Gerard directs it to be dressed with wine and spices, and though our

French neighbours, whose system appears to be that of obscuring, transforming, and confounding every thing, of turning "frogs into larks, and pigeons into toads," pretend to dress it in twenty ways. In the Highlands, however, the potatoe is rarely used otherwise than simply boiled; and it now forms a very large and important part of the diet of the people. I know not if sowens was ever a Highland fashion, but I never once saw it; the meal being always made into porridge. At sea, and in towns, this is sometimes eaten with beer, or with molasses and water; but in the country, with milk, which is also a standing article of food. Potatoes, and oatmeal, with milk, must, in fact, be considered as the general vegetable diet of the country; the others are local or incidental; and the larger portion of the barley is destined for the market; for distillation.

As to the use of spirits, individuals, of course, cannot distil merely for themselves; and, for the same reason, spirits can form no part of their diet, as they can rarely afford to purchase, what, from the hazard attending it, and from other causes, necessarily bears a high price. It has also been asserted, that, in former days, a good deal of ale was brewed; the introduction of distillation not being of very ancient date. It has been further said that the Highlanders brewed ale from the tops of heath. Both of these assertions must probably be taken with a good deal of qualification. It is probable that ale was brewed in the family of the Chief, or of the principal tenants; but it is impossible that, in the ancient state of the country, the smaller tenants, the clan, or vassals, could have had the means of doing that. As to heath, the flowers might have been added to barley or malt for the purpose of giving flavour; but those who talk of ale made from this plant alone, as a lost art, can know nothing about beer but how to swallow it. It has been often said that it would

be desirable to introduce beer again into the Highlands, and to substitute it for whisky. I, for one, should be heartily glad to find that every Highlander could afford to drink his quart every day; but these philanthropists should first discover a mode of paying for it. Those who only get from their little farms as much solid food as they require, and with whom grain forms but a small portion of that, would be puzzled to brew beer for their own use; and those who cannot pay for whisky, who have, in fact, no money to spend on superfluities, could as little afford to buy it from the manufacturer. If the Highlanders were rich enough to make daily or frequent use of whisky, it would then indeed be worth our while to try to make them exchange it for beer. But the superfluous barley which is now disposed of in distillation, finds a market in the shape of whisky, which, as beer, it could not.

I think it more a matter to be regretted, that the catalogue of a Highlander's vegetable diet, is not enlarged by the introduction of that to which the country and climate is every where favourable, and to which the minute system of farming, and the petty attentions usually required from them, in other things, are peculiarly adapted, namely, gardens. On the neglect of these I made some remarks formerly. Independent of the gratification or relief derived from variety of diet, much might be done in this way, towards filling an occasional, and sometimes a very serious, blank, that takes place between the consumption of the old and the arrival of the new harvest. Where potatoes have been prevented from ripening by early frosts, this deficiency is sometimes such as almost to amount to famine. Where also much fish or sea fowl is consumed, the disorders which these tend to generate are, as I formerly hinted, far better counteracted by the use of ordinary culinary roots and vegetables than by

grain or potatoes. To say that the introduction of this practice is impossible; is to argue against all experience: it may possibly not be very easy; but a real philanthropist, he who shall exert himself personally, on his own estate, in the field, and among the people, instead of sitting down to fashionable canting in the pages of a magazine, will not easily fail of being rewarded with success. If half of the talk and trouble which has been bestowed on kilts and such like follies, were directed to this improvement, if those who labour to restore their people to as much of the barbarism of antiquity as they can compass, would bestow the same energy on really bettering their condition, they would scarcely be disappointed; while, if to be contented with the quiet reward of an approving conscience were to them more valuable than the unmeaning applause which a few annual paragraphs bestow on that shadowy and unintelligible entity, a "true Highlander," they would assuredly sleep sounder after contemplating fifty kale yards of their own creation, than from drinking as many toasts to Clan na Gael or Clymore and Breachan. As to myself, if I were a Highland Chief, I would let my people wear as many breeches as a Dutchman, provided they would also add to them, even cole slaw or sour krout.

It is marvellous, on physical and political considerations, that the Highlanders should so totally neglect what is so attainable and would be so advantageous. On one article of gardening, it is marvellous in an antiquarian and historical view. Among their Danish or Norwegian ancestors, the leek was venerated, as much at least as it was in ancient Egypt; and it has never been denied that the Egyptians ate their Gods; as the Turks accuse the Catholics of doing still. The grass that grew in the Danish Paradise consisted of leeks. To describe a land flowing with milk and honey, as we call it, the Scandina-

vian poet would have spoken of the fields where the ground is covered with the fragrant herb, the delight and "food of heroes," and where the breeze of the south wafts the lovely alliaceous perfume. The promise and "fair rose of the state," was the "Leek" of his family. As to these Egyptian Gods, I presume the people worshipped leeks much on the same principle as the Highlanders worship John Barleycorn. Doubtless the sons of Odin brought the leek from Egypt with them, when they carried off the hieroglyphics; and, in the same manner, it must have been from the worship of Apis, that the Highlanders have derived the expression, Laoighe na chri, Calf of my heart. Indeed, that is quite plain; and hence it is that a Highlander would as soon set about eating his child, as his calf or any of its progenitors. The Welsh have been wiser in all respects; since they have borrowed the Egyptian God, the food of heroes, from their Cimbric ancestors doubtless, and eat him too. Shakspeare fancies that this reverence for leeks arose from Crecy and its glorious day. The Poet is out in his antiquities. It was from reverence to St. David, who "only drank the drink that crystal Hodney yields, and fed upon the leeks he gathered in the fields."

I cannot get the better of this Highland gardening; as you see. If they would only raise a leek, in imitation of their Norman ancestry, all the rest might follow of itself in time. I wish somebody would translate Virgil's Georgics into Gaelic, for their new schools. If I could write that harmonious language, I would at least translate for them the speech of the Corycian old gentleman, and send it round with an apple tree at the foot, a cabbage at one side, and a leek at the other, to be hung up parallel to the great Stewart tree, (which had long ceased to bear good fruit when it was cut down,) the victories of Trafalgar and Busaco, and the renowned achievements of the

heroic Wallace. But they have nothing of the spirit of an old Roman in them, or of a warlike Dane either; or they would not neglect that of which these bold fellows spoke with a delight as great as they spoke of glorious war. If this project should fail, I know of no way of attacking Donald, but through those marrying propensities which I discussed some time ago. In Dhagistan, no Tartar is allowed to marry who has not planted a hundred fruit trees: but perhaps Donald thinks he has performed this duty, according to the Irish translation, when he has dug up a few yards of peat, and laid down a hundred potatoe sets.

In sober sadness, there is difficulty in all innovation; but had there never been any exertions made for such purposes, we might all have been ouran outangs to this day. The potatoe has been introduced into the Highlands as it has every where else, and through much contention and prejudice. This was a serious breach in Highland philosophy; and it is far easier to make a second than a first, as it is easy to enlarge the old one by battering on at the first hole which our shot have made in the bastion. It is far from true that this is a race averse to innovation. It has always appeared to me far otherwise. They are an acute, observing, and reasoning people; and that, not from education, and therefore only among the upper ranks, but down to the lowest of the community. If I were to seek, in Britain, for an intractable people in this respect, it should be among the proud English boors; and that, too, very high in the scale. In them, it arises from ignorance added to conceit, from sheer bullet-headed obstinacy: in the Highlanders, the difficulty to contend with is, on the contrary, contentedness or indolence; while many of the difficulties to be surmounted, flow also from poverty and many

other obvious circumstances in the condition of the country, on which I need not dwell.

The state of the Highlands varies so much in different places, that it is not easy to form any estimate of the relative proportion in which grain and potatoes enter into the food of the people. It is however an important question. It is, in the first place, evident, that the potatoe has been gradually extending its influence ever since its first introduction; and, within my own limited observation, I can still perceive, almost its annual increase. That increase coincides with the gradually increasing subdivision of farms, or the increase of population, of which it is, at the same time, the cause and effect. It is from this cause that the proportion of this root in the people's diet, varies so much in different places; in some, being equal to that of grain, in a few even far greater, and in others again, being much less. As yet, I have found no place where, as in Ireland, the potatoe is the exclusive article of vegetable diet; though I think that there are some fast approaching to this state. Speaking in a general way, I do not suppose there would be any great error in considering the potatoe as forming two thirds of the vegetable food of the Highlands.

The proportion of animal food used in this country, taking the whole together, has been generally inconsiderable; but, taking the sea coasts alone, it has been important, and, from the extension of the system of maritime crofting, has for some time been gradually increasing. Of course, I allude to fish; since, of any other, the Highlanders have little experience. In the great pastoral districts, the mutton of sheep that have died of braxy, is generally dried or salted for use; but it is rare that the smaller or general order of tenants, can afford to eat their sheep or lambs on any other terms. Sea birds need

scarcely be named; as their use is almost limited to St. Kilda; although there are many other situations where the example of those active people might be followed with advantage.

But there is really no reason why their animal food should be so restricted. It will scarcely be argued that, although they are contented with oatcakes and potatoes, it would not be an improvement if they possessed, at least some proportion of a better diet, though that should not consist of beef and mutton. When they have adopted my projected improvement, and arrived at leeks or beans, I hope the reformer who follows me will teach them to say, or sing, " O quando uncta, satis pingui, ponentur oluscula lardo." Why should they not have bacon to their cabbage; I know not. But it is not likely they will ever arrive at that till they have shown energy enough to provide cabbage for their bacon. They may fancy they dislike pork, if they please: but if they do, it is certain that Ossian was not a Highlander, and they must then renounce all claims to a descent from Fingal. Indeed I think this argument against the Highland origin of Ossian's Poems quite insurmountable, though I happened to overlook it formerly; and if they really mean to prove their lineage and claims, I recommend them to take to pig meat as fast as possible. There can be no question that Fingal had a seat in Valhalla, with his father Trathal, and his grandfather Trenmor, and his son Ossian, and his grandsons Ullin, Carril, and Rhyno, voices of the days of old. It is equally certain that they breakfasted, dined, and supped, upon the boar Scrymner, and that the Goddess Gna was the housekeeper. To be sure, it would be against the liberty of the subject to cram the modern Fingalians with this diet, by force, as you do a sausage; particularly as Dr. Kitchener considers forced meat unwholesome; but I think when once

they have heard my theory, and Vallancey's, of their real origin from the Jews, a descent quite clear, they will hasten to remove the stigma by taking the pig into their embraces, and the office of a hog in the Highlands will no longer be that of a gentleman and a sinecurist. There must be some oblique and Mosaical parentage of this kind; because the pig (I never speak his name without respect) was highly favoured by the Welsh, and the Britons, and the Gauls, as well as by the Saxons and Scandinavians; all brethren from whom our friends have so basely degenerated. Honourable must his state have been when he and his family are represented in basso relievo on the ancient British coinage. Mr. Pegge will tell you whether it was on the guineas of Brute or Cymbeline. Moreover, says Strabo, the Gallic sows and hogs ranged the fields, wild and dangerous as wolves; as is confirmed by the edicts of the great Howel Dha, in his acts of parliament, cap. 13, about the ringing of sows.

If I remarked formerly that the Highlanders did not eat geese, though so easily raised and fed, that perhaps arises from respect to the fashions of those very ancestors, of whom Cæsar says, "Gallinam et Anserem gustare fas non putant; hæc tamen alunt animi voluptatisque causa." If so, that is an additional argument in recommendation of the pig; whom they are thus in honour bound to eat, that they may maintain that antiquarian consistency which they display, not only in this matter, but in their houses, their aversion to work, and their love of fighting. But as we need not care much for Cæsar on the subject of geese and fowls, I cannot see what is to prevent a Highlander from having a roasted goose at Michaelmas, and, as I said before in this very letter, a roasted fowl now and then. The same proceedings which would enable them to eat pigs, would also, with greater ease, give them this command. Speaking philosophically, as the case

deserves, there is nothing to prevent them from raising more potatoes for these purposes. I may admit, that there are places where they have neither land nor manure for that purpose; but these are rare. In general, they may increase their potatoes by increasing their industry, by taking more land from their wastes. They raise now precisely what they intend to eat; because there is no sale, and as it is held useless to raise more, of an article that is perishable. But the superfluity, which would cost nothing but the labour, would be refunded with some interest by the pigs and the chickens; and as to the geese, they can manage their own diet. They feed with great facility in a country of this nature; while on the sea shores also, in particular, the rearing of a pig, up to the period of his fattening at least, requires neither food nor attention. If the people did not even choose to eat these animals, there are few situations where they might not find a market for them, and thus add to their comforts in one way, if not in another. But I am desirous that a Highlander should have a better dinner occasionally than he now possesses, if he cannot get that every day; and if thus writing were likely to procure it to him, I would even run the risk of wearying you still further, and of wearing out another pen.

But these are projects and speculations; and though time will see them executed, I shall not. The established and accessible animal food of the country, is fish; at least, on the sea-shores. But though the facility of taking fish is generally very great all along the coasts of the maritime Highlands, and that there are very few cottages without a share, at least, in a boat, the taking and consumption of fish (putting fishing for sale now out of the question) is far less than a traveller would expect. It will disappoint, in particular, those who are familiar with those English sea-coasts where this branch of industry is pur-

sued with activity, and with the effect of producing a perpetual state of plenty among the people. Even in summer, I have entered the Highland cottages hundreds of times, without finding fish, either in the act of eating or in possession: and with regard to laying up winter stores, I have found them even more deficient. It seems to me that this is but a part of their general character of inactivity. In Barra, where the people are active fishermen for sale, they also consume much at home; while, but a few miles off, with the very same advantages, there are whole villages, where the men will scarcely be at the trouble of going to sea. They complain, by way of excuse, of the salt laws, and of the difficulty of procuring salt. But this is really an excuse; as the Excise is extremely liberal with respect to salt, and as there are no difficulties which they might not overcome had they sufficient energy. Were they inclined to buy salt, they would soon find merchants ready enough to supply them. In one view, this negligence ought rather to be a subject for congratulation than otherwise; as it would seem to prove that they were not in want, and that fish was to them rather a luxury than an article of necessity. But I fear that this will not hold good. Scantiness of food, if not real want, occasionally occurs at that season which is the test of their foresight and the time of trial; namely, that which precedes the new harvest. That want has sometimes, and even recently, arisen to something little short of absolute famine. In such a case, they sometimes trust to the sea, which will often disappoint them, from bad weather, or various other causes; when, were it not for that improvidence, which is far too common a feature among them, they might have had stores reserved from those periods in which fishing is easy, and fish abundant.

In this want of activity in fishing, the Highlanders

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seem to resemble their brethren of Wales in Hollinshed's days, when he says of them, "There is great gaines to be gotten by fishing round about this isle (Anglesea), if the people there could use the trade, but they want both cunning and diligence to take that matter in hand." This want of cunning and diligence in the Welsh, continues the same, even to this day (though they are cunning enough in other matters), since they suffer all the fish on their coasts to be taken by the Brixham boats and carried to Bristol; never thinking either of catching or eating a fish themselves. But as I am always fond of fishing out an apology for my friends, if possible, I must even suppose that the repugnance and tardiness of the Highlanders and the Welsh in "taking this matter in hand," arises, like the not eating of geese, from respect to the usages of their ancestors. The ancient Britons adored the sea, and hence they would not catch a fish. I presume that was because King Lear was the son of Neptune, and king of sprats; and, that to have eaten his subjects, would have been as bad as eating cats, rats, monkeys, hawks, or crocodiles in ancient Egypt. There is a Gaelic proverb still, if I could but quote it, which stigmatizes the Saxons as fish-eaters. Yet in this matter, the Highlanders have shown, as on other occasions, that they did not know a Saxon from their own brother Britons, when it was Wilfrid, the Archbishop, who first taught, even the Saxons, to catch and eat fish.

Of the species of fish, the coal-fish or cuddie must be considered the staple article; not even excepting the herring; as it is taken nearly all the year round, and is to be found every where. It is also the most convenient fishery, as it can be carried on without boats, in many places, merely by rods from the rocks, and sometimes, even by means of landing nets. If this fish is not a delicate one, it is at least nutritious; containing much oil,

and thus, therefore, furnishing light as well as food. The herring may be considered the next in point of value; and, after that, the cod might be rendered so, if it were the fashion, as it is not, to catch it for domestic use. But this subject would require more space than I can afford to give it here. If the Board of Fisheries would extend their activity and their patriotism, there is here abundant occupation for these virtues. Unluckily, the pursuits of foreign commerce among our politicians, absorb every thing; and it seems to be forgotten, that the commerce which is domestic, is often the most advantageous of the two, and that there are other modes of enriching and improving a people, than that of selling for money that they may buy again.

As we are on the subject of fish, you must allow me to correct a numerical error which has crept into the account of the capture of herrings in 1819, when speaking on that matter in the description of Tanera. It arose from having made use of an incomplete manuscript document; but the error does not affect the general argument there drawn from the statement. The capture and salting of 1819, was 340,894 barrels; leaving 113,732 for home consumption, instead of 108,500. The last returns now enable me to add, that the number of herrings taken and cured in 1820, amounted to 382,491; and that in 1821, 1822, and 1823, the quantities were respectively 442,195; 316,524; and 428,869; forming a progressive diminution in the two last seasons. The exportation for these four years are also as follows; in 1820, 253,516; and in the following three, respectively, 294,805; 214,956; and 170,445. You perceive that it is sometimes useful to make blunders; you would not else have gained this additional information.

With respect to the fresh waters, the salmon is, of course, property; and the rivers are let to proper tenants,

almost every where. The sea-trout, which must generally be taken at the mouths of rivers, on the sea-shore, falls thus, in some measure, under the same description. I believe that the people are rarely prevented from angling for trout, either in the lakes or the rivers: it is certain that they ought not, as they cannot injure the proprietors, and may benefit themselves; but they show very little inclination for what, from its mixture of idleness and luck, might be considered a very tempting and appropriate occupation. Whether any plan could be devised for increasing the resources of the people by fisheries of trout in the lakes, which abound every where, is a question which I cannot answer. But some expedient might probably be adopted for turning, at least to the use of some one, much of what is now almost entirely wasted. I do not mean to say that tenants should have an unlimited right of fishing with nets, and without restriction of season or quantity; but the proprietors withhold, with a jealousy as rigid as if these were situated in their own parks, or under their windows, the fishing of lakes which they never saw, and probably never will; deriving themselves no advantage from them, nor suffering any one else to do so. This is true, alike of the remotest districts as of the Lowland border: where there is somewhat more appearance of reason for such restraints.

This can scarcely be the consequence of any thing but extreme thoughtlessness, or of absolute ignorance respecting the propagation of fish. When we look at the enormous extent of land in the Highlands, which is occupied by lakes, the quantity of property, thus neglected and left unproductive, must appear incredible, at least to all those who have turned their attention to the subject of fresh-water fishing. Were there any market or demand for the produce, it is certain that the value of the waters would here be often far greater than

that of the land. In many parts of the Highlands, there would be a foreign, or rather a distant market; in all, the produce might be rendered available, as that of the sea is, to the feeding of the people; and a rent might be levied on the same system as it is on the sea shores, nominally on the land, but virtually on the fish; while such restrictions might be adopted, as the nature of such a fishery renders necessary. In Germany and France, and in other parts of the continent, the fishing of waters is as regular a branch of rural economy as the raising of corn; and, in many places, it is the occupation of a distinct set of farmers. In general, in France, there is an average of equality between the rent of land and that of water, acre for acre; and the fishing in all these countries is so conducted as to pay this rent, and to produce a profit to the tenant, in perpetuity. It is an utter mistake, and it is almost purely a British one, to be afraid of destroying fresh-water fish by ordinary fishing. When the net happens to be tried, and few fish are taken, it is supposed that a continuation of attempts of the same nature would exterminate the race. It is, however, quite the reverse; and, under a well-regulated system, not only a constant supply may be procured, but the quantity in the waters will increase instead of diminish. A lake or a pond well and properly fished, is like the purse of Fortunatus; it may appear to be empty, but the more it is used the more it yields. Nor is it very difficult to account for what may appear paradoxical. A single grown fish will, in a day, destroy hundreds, or even thousands, in the form of spawn or fry; and, to destroy that tyrant, is to save these for future growth; for consumption and propagation alike. But it is unnecessary to dwell on what ought to be very obvious, from reasoning, if it were not even known to be the fact from practice. If proprietors of warrens acted

like proprietors of waters, they would get no rabbits; they might equally imagine that there were none, or that they did not propagate. Those who cannot understand the preceding reasoning, and who will not believe facts which they have, perhaps, heard for the first time, may possibly comprehend an analogy which is exact, and a truth which they must know. "On the same principle that which will not fish its lakes, St. Kilda need not eat its own sheep; but it is certain, that, eat them or not, there never can be more than two thousand, and that if they eat two or three hundred annually, the number will not be diminished, while the flocks will be of a better quality. Yet these examples, though analogical, are imperfect and deficient analogies: since, in the case of fish, the check to increase arises, not merely from want of food, but from mutual destruction. Let those who are holders of Highland lakes, cease to condemn their ignorant and uninstructed tenantry, for tardiness or obstinacy in adopting improvements because they are innovations.

To proceed now to another question connected with the food of the Highlands, it is very evident that the large increase of the population which has been experienced of late, and which is still in progress, has been chiefly the consequence of the introduction of the potatoe; although the better method of occupying lands, the increase of sheep, the diminution of horses, the augmentation of fishing, and some other causes, must be allowed a share in the effect. Whether it has really been doubled in the Western Islands alone, within sixty years, as has been said, the documents are perhaps insufficient to allow us to judge. Yet, not only has this great and leading effect followed, but the supply of food, which has enabled the people to rear more children, producing this consequence, has also improved their strength and health; since, in a general sense, they are not stinted in the quantity. It is also to be believed that the people

have gained in beauty from the same cause; that being very much determined by the sufficient or insufficient supply of food which children get in early life. Better fed children than those of the Highland peasantry there cannot be; and, to the disgrace of England, they are, on the average, in far better and higher condition than the children in large English towns, and where wages are high. The English labourer or manufacturer either starves his family to indulge himself in gin and porter, or else, instead of being fed with a sufficiency of cheap and substantial diet, they are, from false pride, starved on an insufficient proportion of wheaten bread, flesh meat, and tea. Another great advantage has arisen from the potatoe; and this is, that the food of the people is less subject to casualties and failures than when it consisted of grain. Except from early frosts, it seldom suffers; and any very considerable or extensive failures of the Highland potatoe crops, have, I believe, never yet occurred. The failure of grain crops, from bad seasons and various causes, still happens; and formerly, when that was the sole dependence, the effects were serious, and often dreadful, even with a far inferior population. Ancient tales of famine are frequent; and it was under such visitations as these that the people had recourse to the singular and apparently savage expedient, long since abandoned, of bleeding their cattle; the expedient of a starving Arab. Of absolute famine now, there are no examples: but cases very nearly approaching to it, have occurred from the failure of the grain crops. Taking that part of the supply, only at a third of all the food, it is plain that a half crop would leave a serious deficiency; and, according to the too common improvidence of the people, perhaps a month of famine. If, in many places, the small tenants are really unable to raise a surplus for contingencies, on account of the want of land, it is also

but too true that they are not sufficiently provident against possible failures.

That something far too nearly approaching to famine does occasionally occur, even at the present day, is too well known. I already noticed the poverty of a portion of the people in Barra; I also remarked on the state of Caithness and Sutherland during one particular summer; and it is unfortunately certain, that such is the general close adaptation of the people to the food, at present, as to render it probable that similar misfortunes must sometimes inevitably take place. The history of that summer in Sutherland was highly distressing; but I omitted to notice it when describing that country, that I might reserve it till the general question should come under review. Where the river meets the sea at Tongue, there is a considerable ebb, and the long sand banks are productive of cockles, in an abundance which is almost unexampled. At that time, they presented, every day at low water, a singular spectacle; being crowded with men, women, and children, who were busily employed in digging for these shell-fish as long as the tide permitted. It was not unusual also to see thirty or forty horses from the surrounding country, which had been brought down for the purpose of carrying away loads of them, to distances of many miles. This was a well-known season of scarcity, and, without this resource, I believe it is not too much to say, that many individuals must have died of want. The meal had been scanty, in consequence of the failure of the last year's harvest, the potatoes had supplied its place till they were exhausted, the new crop was far off, and nothing remained, in many places, but an insufficient supply of milk. I visited many cottages here, and found the people living on milk and cockles, without a particle of vegetable matter. In other parts of the country, where this resource was not to be

obtained, their sufferings were severe; and although cases of death from mere famine were not said to have occurred, it is too well known that it often produces this effect, by the intervention of the diseases which it generates. At Loch Inver, I was informed that many, even of the young and strong, were confined to their beds from mere debility; and that a shoal of fish having come into the Bay, the men were, literally, unable to row their boats out to take them. Similar distress was experienced in many of the Highland districts, and among the islands, during the same season; but, in general, the maritime inhabitants suffered little, compared to those who had no access to fish, or who happened to be placed in situations where the fisheries were not productive.

This was a distress that money could not immediately relieve; as, owing to the circumstances of the country, there is no market for the purchase of corn. Severe, however, as the burden was on the proprietors, and particularly so on the larger landholders, every thing was done that active humanity could suggest, by the importation of cargoes of meal and grain, which were either distributed at a low price, or advanced as a loan, or given, as circumstances rendered it necessary. It is but an act of bare justice to record this, for the honour of those who have been represented, by the ignorant and prejudiced, as the oppressors of their tenantry; as unfeeling and rapacious tyrants. That the remedy should not have been, every where, either sufficiently speedy or effectual, is not matter of surprise; when the extent of the evil is considered, and the delay which, almost necessarily, occurred in bringing round the cargoes of supplies to this remote country.

These accidents, scarcities approaching to famine, which are now so rare in comparison with former times, offer a sufficient proof of the improvement which the

Highlands have undergone; not merely from the introduction of the potatoe, but from the change, so often reprobated by thoughtless and angry persons, which has taken place in the whole system of Highland tenantry. The increased facilities in pursuing a system of fishing, which have resulted from the new distribution of the people, have, in this respect, aided the cultivation of the potatoe; but neither can be rendered as effectual as they might be, till the people themselves cooperate, by increasing their industry. It would also be useful, if, for the Second Sight over which they lament, they would substitute a little useful common foresight, by paying more attention to laying up stores of fish. To foresee a famine would be of more value than foreseeing an event, which, as Apollonius of Tyana is reported to have said of his own prophecies, ἔσται και ουκ ἔσται. This would be a better occupation than regretting Ossian or the ghosts of the hill. As Chrysostom says, "Miserable and woeful creatures that we are, we cannot so much as expel fleas, much less devils." In this prudent foresight, as I have just remarked, they are too often lamentably and culpably deficient; content with eating their fish fresh when they can take them, though not very active, even in that respect; but seldom salting or drying them for winter stores, to the extent which they might. There is an interval also between the expenditure of the old crop of potatoes and the arrival of the new, to which I just alluded, which is almost always a source of some distress: a grievance which might, I much suspect, be, in some degree, remedied, by a more extended cultivation, and by more care in the preservation; although it must be admitted that the occasionally imperfect ripening of the crops, is an evil that cannot well be removed by any care in storing this root.

But this valuable plant has not yet, itself, experienced

that attention which it demands, and which it more particularly requires for the Highlands. The failure of a crop is rare, and may be irremediable. But it is common for the plants to be cut off by the early frosts of autumn, before the root is fully grown, or ripe; and the consequence is, that the crop becomes, therefore, not only deficient in the expected weight, but that the roots will not keep till the season for the new harvest arrives. If the potatoe is the native of a high, and therefore a temperate, region of America, it is still the produce of a warm climate. In a certain sense, it has been naturalized to our colder one; but it is far yet from being thoroughly so. It is by no means naturalized to the Highlands; and hence the premature termination of its annual growth, from early cold. Now, it is well known, that when plants are propagated by roots, or cuttings, or grafts, the produce continues to have the characters of the parent, in point of tenderness, and that no progress in the naturalization of the plants of hot climates is made by this practice. The laurel, propagated by slips, is now as tender as on the day it was introduced, though centuries have passed away. The same is true universally, so as to have become an established law in horticulture. But if the seeds be sown, the progeny becomes a degree hardier than the parent; and if this process of sowing successive seeds, from successive generations thus raised, is continued for a sufficient length of time, the exotic becomes finally hardy. That period has not been ascertained; and it must indeed be expected to vary in different plants. But the Zizania aquatica was perfectly naturalized in thirteen generations; and the Canna Indica, as I have shown in the Caledonian Horticultural Transactions, has long been rendered hardy by the same treatment. In the important case under consideration, the potatoe is almost invariably propagated by the roots; and hence

it continues to be a tender and an exotic plant still. When it is raised from seed, that is only done for the purpose of procuring new varieties; and, these once obtained, no further sowing takes place, but the new variety continues to be propagated in the usual manner. There can be little question that this plant might be rendered perfectly hardy by the system which I have thus described; and though it would require some years of an experimental cultivation, which would not produce the same profits as the ordinary method, from the time which the seedlings require to arrive at maturity, the benefits would, in the end, amply repay the sacrifices. To render the potatoe, in the Highlands, what it is in England, would be one of the greatest gifts which could now be bestowed on that country. If this is not to be expected from farmers or gardeners, who must look at every thing with a view to immediate profit, it is surely not too much to expect from an opulent Highland proprietor, or from those Societies whose labours are so apt to begin where they end, in publishing useless transactions and empty debates. The Society which shall confer this benefit on its country, will have greater reason to congratulate itself on the act, inglorious as it may seem, than if it had succeeded in re-establishing the Gaelic language, the songs of Ossian, and the agonistics of dismembered cattle.

Thus much for the advantages to be derived from the potatoe, and from the improvements of which it is yet susceptible. But it must now not be forgotten, that these advantages are to be balanced against an evil which, if remote, is nevertheless certain. This is that state of things, of which Ireland has become so fearful an example. It is creeping on in the Highlands in many places; and, in some, with rapid strides. Nor can it be avoided, as long as the eternal subdivision of farms continues, and as long as the people are either unable to

migrate or unwilling to move, even though for ever vacillating on the very margin of want. When their lots will no longer supply grain enough, they will still supply potatoes. Thus there is a reserve of food for some time; but, beyond this, there is no resource. When the land will no longer produce sufficient grain, when its possibilities and powers are exhausted, and when, after this, and in the necessary progress of the present system, the power of producing potatoes has also arrived at its limits, there is no further expedient by which more food can be produced, or by which a casual deficiency can be remedied. There is no further vegetable substitute. Then comes the possibility, or the prospect, or the imminence of famine. If there is even a partial failure, if the exact and expected limit is not reached, a degree of famine becomes actual. There can be no cheaper substitute of food, because there is no more productive vegetable remaining. If the failure should be complete, or considerable, absolute famine arrives suddenly and unexpectedly. To possess corn in the country, is even then no relief; because those who could scarcely command a cheap article of food, cannot possibly purchase a dear one. He who is starving in the high price of grain, can still find potatoes in the market, if he has aught to give in exchange; but he who is starving in the high price of potatoes, because he has subsided from the stage of an eater of grain to that of an eater of potatoes, is beyond relief, except from pure charity. Nor, in an agricultural view, is there any retreat from this state of things; because the land, which has approached to inefficiency in the produce of potatoes, has become absolutely inefficient to producing grain. Every step, even to augmenting the produce, is also a step nearer to the catastrophe which must at last come; because the nearer the balance is attained, the greater risk there is that slight causes will overturn it the wrong way.

But I need not go deeper into this, though among the most interesting questions at present, in that branch of public economy which belongs to agriculture. It is however not unimportant to show how the same reasoning applies to fish; so that as there is a ruinous potatoe system, there is also a ruinous fish one. It is quite conceivable that the continued division of maritime farms may at length render fish, first a necessary part of the people's food, and, ultimately, the exclusive diet; as it is in many parts of Northern Tartary and of America. This is even a degree worse than the last system of dependence on the land. When the potatoe fails, the sea may still be a resource; but if that fails, all is gone; for it is the last. It is scarcely necessary to add, that such a supply is, from its very nature, a precarious one; while the species of food, if it is to be the only one, is far from desirable. It is this which is the real objection to the new maritime crofting system of the Highlands. That the sea is inexhaustible of fish, may be true; but the powers of man over it are exhaustible, they are subject to accidents, and the very visits of fish are of a capricious and unsteady nature. That the diet of the maritime crofters should become too exclusively dependent on the sea, is the real danger to be apprehended; though those who have excited so much clamour on the late changes of the Highlands, have overlooked it. Whether these changes could have been avoided, is another question; but it is one which I shall have occasion to examine hereafter, when that system will come under review.

But I must end. I am in danger of a profound essay on political economy. I have been in danger of an essay on the education of pigs; "Atque equidem, ni terris festinem advertere proram, Forsitan et pingues hortos quæ cura colendi, Ornaret canerem."

RASAY. SKY. PORTREE. NORTH-EAST-COAST OF SKY.

You can easily imagine how a man's mind becomes fishified in such a voyage as this; with jack tars for all its society, sea gulls for its music, bilge water for lavender, and, for St. James's street and the opera, the rude rocks, the ruder ocean, and the howling of the storm. As the plunge of the anchor gave notice that the voyage of that day was ended, I came on deck to examine our night's lodging. Things seemed wilder and ruder than ever. Dark clouds were settling upon the huge mountains of Sky, and the gloom of the evening was gathering fast on all the surrounding objects. The wind was still whistling in the rigging, and a wild sea was running down the long channel which we had just left to cast our anchor in the harbour of Rasay. But amid this brown, dreary, comfortless land, a neat white house, backed by a few trees, assured us that, even here, there were other inhabitants than the cormorants, which, drawn up in long black ranks, were drying their wings in the gale. Returning to my warm cabin to speculate on insular life, I was shortly surprised by a visit from the friendly Laird himself, who insisted on taking me to his house. It was vain to imagine that the progress of so great a man could be a secret: wherever I went, Fame, flying on the wings of a sea mew, had preceded me. Such is the good fortune that must attend greater, or less men, it is all one, in a country so destitute of events.

But only imagine my utter confusion of mind and body, when I suddenly found and felt myself in an elegant drawing room, round which were arranged some twenty young ladies, with their white muslins, and feathers, and all other things befitting, like flowers in a green house, breathing sweets. To emerge from a coal pit into the sunshine, could not be more dazzling. Whenever you wish to enjoy afresh, the impressions long blunted by the crowds of Grosvenor or Portman square, come to Rasay: come in a black narrow ship, in a storm, anchor among the winds and the breakers, land your boat in the surf, ride to shore on the back of a Highlander, and, from a dark night of wind and rain, tumble headlong into the complexity of silks, and muslins, and beauty, and lights, and plenty, and elegance; into festivity and conversation, music and the dance. It seemed as if I had been destined to feel the full force of Dr. Johnson's well-remembered remark, and that too in the very same place. I scarcely can tell you from how many lands the present party had been collected; as the term neighbour has, in this country, a signification not much less wide than in the Parable. Neighbourhood seems to extend from Barra to Stornoway, to Sky, Rasay, Coll, nay, to Inverness. And what is much more amusing, every one knows of his neighbour's births, whether of calves or children, and of his business, and of his wife's tea drinkings, for a hundred miles round; and a coterie in Sky or Mull discusses the ribbands, complexion, loves, and hatreds, of all the misses and masters whose mutuality of sentiment might be supposed diluted to nothing, before traversing distances, as remote and difficult of transit as those which lie between the Baltic and you.

But life, unfortunately, cannot all be spent among bright eyes, and in delights. As Jack, when the blue Peter is flying, says to Nancy, "duty calls away." I

wish it could. Even sapphires and diamonds might have been but dull geology afterwards; and what a contrast was mine, "damnatus ad metalla," to black trap, and wearisome gneiss, and gryphites and graywacke. As if life was too full of pleasures, especial care is taken that they shall neither be too many nor too durable; and if there should be any risk of that, the tooth-ach, or something else, comes in the way, or there is aloes on the edge of the cup, or rixation and penitence at the bottom, or a snake in the grass, or, what will answer the purposes of all put together, the Ague. The Goddess Perfica does her duties very ill in this world. None of the whole thirty thousand seem to have deserved their temples worse; and if the Poet had not thought so, he would not have said "medio de fonte leporum," and what follows. One thing, however, is clear, that he is no very wise man who goes hunting after trap and graywacke at the risk of his neck, when, as the Frenchman says, "he might enjoy himself with the ladies in the parlour."

This is a dreary island, and it is about fourteen miles in length and three in breadth; while to the north of it, there is a smaller appendage called Flodda, separated by a narrow sound which is dry at half tide. This passage has been carelessly laid down in the chart, as fit for ships. It is not the only blunder which Mackenzie has made. On another occasion, I had intended to have taken my vessel through it. But I had learnt to doubt this guide, and fortunately thought it would be a safer attempt in the boat; had I tried the ship, we should have been embayed and lost. From the western shore, which is low, but skirted by rocks, the land rises every where, brown, rocky, and dreary, towards the east, where it is bounded, for a great part, by high abrupt cliffs. Dun Can hill, the highest point, is about 1500 feet in height; and although that elevation is not a very con-

siderable one in such a country as this, it presents, from its insulated and unobstructed position, a magnificent and extensive view. Nothing could be more perfect than the details of the whole mountainous and varied western coast of the mainland, as seen from this point. The extreme visible object to the north, was the Ru Storr of Assynt: and, nearer to the eye, was extended the long and flat point of the Ru Rea, backed by Suil Veinn, and by the high mountains of Loch Inver, Loch Broom, Loch Torridon, and Loch Ewe; continued southwards along the shores of Applecross, Kintail, and Glenelg, and detailed in every variety of colour and form. The entrances of Loch Carron, Loch Kishorn, and Loch Duich, were also visible, with the whole intricate passage of the Kyle Rich, and the varied rocks and islands of these straits. The entrance of Loch Hourn was covered by the mountains of Sky; but, beyond, the Sound was again visible, with the hills of Knoydart, Morrer, Arisaik, and Moidart; prolonging, under different forms and fainter colouring, this magnificent line of mountain land. Still further south, Egg and Rum were seen, misty and faint, beyond the dark mass of the Cuchullin hills, which formed the grandest feature of the whole view. Northward, Sky was detailed in great distinctness; the eye tracing, even its wild rocks and cliffs and shores and craggy mountain precipices, and looking across Loch Snizort and Loch Bracadale, so as to distinguish Lewis and Harris, a misty line on the horizon. Nearer at hand, Scalpa, Pabba, Rona, and all the islands and rocks of this channel, were scattered over the dark blue sea beneath, that stretched away towards the northern horizon. It is no small addition to the sublimity of this picture, to look down from this lofty precipice, on a sea, of which we can neither see the boundary beneath us, nor hear the sound; and to trace the white, yet scarcely discernible,

sails of the ships that are navigating the inner channel and the numerous inlets by which the distant line of the water is diversified.

If nature had made a day on purpose for idle gentlemen and gulls, she could not have made a better one than that which enabled me to row all round the eastern shore. It requires some knowledge in the art of walking, to cross a land that is every where furrowed by ridges of two or three hundred feet in depth, resembling those of a stormy ocean suddenly converted into stone. Nearly all the green and cultivated land of Rasay lies on the tops of the high eastern cliffs, which are every where covered with scattered farms, that form a striking contrast to the solitary brown waste of the western coast. As we rowed along beneath this lofty land, they appeared perched above our heads; often seeming to hang over the deep below, like birds' nests, and, in some places, so high as to be scarcely visible from the water. These cliffs reach from five or six hundred to a thousand feet in height, being formed of beautiful white sandstone, and the precipices being intermixed with grassy slopes and patches, and skirted at the foot by huge masses that have slid down from above, or by piles of enormous fragments, heaped in all the disorder of ruin. The flat forms of the sandstone are fine, while they are diversified by broken and detached masses, by torrents, green slopes, and dispersed patches of brushwood and trees. The outline is simple and grand, varied by spires and conical forms rising like towers and castles against the sky: and the diversified ochry tints of the rock producing a warmth and splendour of colour, finely contrasted with the deep dark green of the sea below. Here are quarries, out of which cities might be built, without making a sensible impression on the bulk of the cliffs; and could Rasay transport his barren rocks to London, he would have little

reason to care for the green fields he might leave behind.

Where these terminate, the land slopes down to the sea; intricate, irregular, and interspersed with rocks, trees, and farm-houses; the seat of that singular structure, Brochel Castle. This is, indeed, the garden of Rasay; and if the ancient seat of this ancient family is neither very convenient nor very capacious, it is by much the most remarkable in the whole catalogue of Highland castles. The wide bright sea, the distant mountains of the main-land, and the long bold cliffs of Rasay, with the castle towering over the scene, rocky precipices rising out of the sea, trees feathering down to the very water's edge, and little bays crowded by the masts, sails, nets, and boats of the village, form landscapes not often equalled in singularity, or exceeded in beauty. This singular build-ing, the effect of which is so new and so striking, stands on the summit of an insulated rock, which rises itself like a tower above the green slope on which it stands; and the structure is so contrived, that the walls and the rock form one continuous precipice; the outline and dis-position of the whole being in themselves highly pic-turesque. It is easy to imagine the strength of a place that could scarcely be assailed or mined; and the only access to it is by single footsteps cut in the steep turfy slope, which, on one side, leads to the entrance. Except-ing the roof, this building is perfectly entire, and might be restored to a habitable state, at a moderate expense. While it would have been impossible to have ruined Brochel Castle, it would not have been easy to have attacked it by fire, or rather by smoke; a mode of assault usual in former times, and recorded in a well-known ballad, where the prisoner remonstrates with those who have taken out the stone which "lets in the reek to me."

In speaking of the Highland defences formerly, I took notice of the general want of flanks; and the

omission is the more remarkable, because the principle was familiar at that age, and duly valued as it was well understood. It would seem as if the Highland Chiefs had never thought or heard of extending the principle of fortification beyond that of their wild ancestors of Britain and Scandinavia; whose only system seems, with few exceptions, to have been that by which they fortified their cattle against the wolf. Even the theory of the Flank is not so new as has been often supposed by those who only know of it as connected with modern fortification. Almost all the real principles of this art will be found in ancient works or ancient writers; allowing for those modifications in the forms, which have been necessarily introduced in consequence of the adoption of new projectiles for the attack and the defence. Vegetius distinctly lays down both the principles of the Flank and its uses. Babylon, long ago, and Jerusalem, somewhat later, were evidently fortified on this system. Even the principle of Commands is detailed by Vitruvius, where the Terreplein of the wall, which is crenellated, is succeeded by more elevated redoubts and places of arms within the town, in case of an escalade and a lodgment. It was from the Romans, that these principles descended to our ancestors, and to modern Europe in general; till the introduction of cannon produced, a little before 1500, the substitution of the angular bastion for the round or square tower, and made those other additions and changes which experience proved to be useful or necessary. I remarked before, that the Fausse Bray itself, was a defence of the Gothic ages; and that the advanced Covered way occurred even in the most ancient of our field works, the Vitrified forts and the ordinary Dunes. All these facts serve to render the imperfection of the Highland fortresses the more remarkable: particularly when it is considered that the condition of the people

was one of perpetual warfare, and that there could have been no want of means under a system so military and so feudal.

On the day of this expedition, the sea was one broad and placid mirror. Not a breeze ruffled the surface, the sun-beams gleamed bright on the green expanse, and the gentlest of waves murmured along the shores, like the rippling stream of a spring day among flowery banks and green meadows. Halcyons might have built their nests on the sleeping waters, had there been any halcyons given to these vagaries. But no one that has read Horace, is credulous enough to expect that the sea will always be bright, that the winds will always sleep, and the waves be content with murmuring. To be always provided for the worst event, is a maxim that will not be wanted any where much oftener than in this land of storms, which, when it smiles, smiles but to deceive. The following day had risen bright and still as the preceding, and had tempted us to embark in our smallest boat. But we had scarcely rowed a mile on our voyage to Portree, when it began to blow; and, in a few minutes, the clouds were seen collecting over the high lands of Sky, boding no good. Having no ballast, we pulled toward the island, in hopes of procuring some; but we found it impossible to land, as the sea had risen with uncommon rapidity, and was breaking wildly all along this iron coast. It then became necessary to try to fetch the cutter, as it was now blowing a strong gale of wind. But we could make no way ahead with the oars, a heavy swell carrying us to the northward; so that there was much danger of our being forced away to sea, in which case we should have taken an eternal farewell of Sky and all its islands. The cutter could no longer see us, owing to the high and hollow sea that was now breaking with great violence; and accordingly we saw her dodg-

ing under her storm sails, many miles to the southward, and almost at a hopeless distance. It was equally impossible to attempt Portree; as the gale had rapidly increased to a hurricane, and the spray of the sea was now drifting over us in one universal white shower. I was right glad that the Captain's presence left me no longer responsible for a piece of pilotage that I should have been little inclined to undertake; and which, it was easy to see, he thought quite enough for himself. There is a sort of consolation, as Monsieur De Pourceaugnac properly remarks, in dying "selon les regles;" it being a great comfort to the defunct to reflect that "les choses etoient dans l'ordre:" and certainly, when a man at a helm begins to suspect that he is likely to be accessary to his own drowning, it does not tend much to steady his eye or his hand; particularly if he be a landsman: a theory which is every day confirmed by the proceedings of sundry idle gentlemen on sea coasts, who assume the helms of their own green and white gallant boats, as full of nautical importance as empty of all nautical judgment. Their fates are recorded in the newspapers of Plymouth, and Yarmouth, and Portsmouth, and Sidmouth, and of all the other mouths that are eternally gaping to swallow up these learned personages.

It became absolutely necessary to set such sail as we could carry, or consent to drift away till we reached the Pole; if it should so happen. Then would two or three hundred weight of ballast have been gladly purchased with as much silver; instead of which, we had seven carcases in a boat not well fitted to carry more than five; top-heavy dogs, whom no power on earth could keep quiet, and who, under pretence of hauling on some tack or tying some point, were every moment shifting about to conceal their fright, endangering our lives at every new change of place. Of all ballast, human is the worst;

unless it be dead; so we stowed away three of them in the bottom of the boat, and thus got into a little better trim. The mizen, twice reefed, was set up for a foresail; and thus we stood towards the cutter, hoping at least that she might see our sail sooner than she was likely to discover the hull of the boat. But the wind was irregular as it was squally; and as, at every instant, we were in imminent hazard of being taken aback, the haulyards and sheet were in constant employment, and it was seldom indeed that we could keep the sail up for a minute together. It was plain enough how matters were likely to go ere long; as the Captain, who was as bold a fellow as ever swallowed salt water, (not the fat and fearful personage who had been afraid of approaching within twenty miles of St. Kilda,) turned as green as a leek, and began to whistle with all his might: a symptom, of which I had experienced the meaning on other occasions. I believe he had pretty nearly arrived at the last tune he was ever likely to whistle in this world, when we at length saw the cutter's sails fill, and beheld her bearing down upon us. We were soon alongside; and, after some exertion, caught a rope that was thrown to us. Unluckily, at this very instant a heavy squall came, and nearly laid the vessel on her beam ends over us. "Haul down the peak, clew up the tack of the mainsail," was the cry on one hand; "let go the rope," on the other: the cutter righted; but, in running astern, we had a second narrow escape from being swamped under her counter. We were much more glad to drift away from her than we had been at her company: and, finding that all prospect of getting on board was hopeless, stood away for Portree; not a little inclined to congratulate the Captain on the success of his whistle, when we found ourselves once more on board. After all, a small boat bears a marvellous quantity of sea: provided she is not swamped or overset.

I wonder if I shall ever forget how the squalls blew down from those vile hills over Portree harbour; or how the water blew up, till there was neither sky, nor land, nor water, nor wind, nor any thing to be distinguished. But what is the rage, even of a Sky hurricane, on paper; words "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

This Royal Port, indebted to King James for its sounding title, forms a very good harbour; but the town seems doomed to repose eternally in the cradle where it was born. Otherwise, it is faultless enough; only do not pay it a visit when all sorts of cattle come to be bought and sold; when horn is entangled in horn and drover with drover, and when the whisking of tails threatens to fit you for the one-eyed society of the copper-coloured castle. But if there should be any doubt in your mind respecting the progress of civilization in the Islands, come to Portree: it possesses a jail. To the church, no praise is due; and blame would here be thrown away; therefore let it rest in its ruins, till the heritors choose to repair it or build a new one. That they should not all show any very violent alacrity on this subject, is no great matter of marvel; as, though the lands of Rasay must contribute their share to church and minister too, they are entitled to no more of the services of the latter, than they choose, first to fetch at the risk of their lives, and then to carry home at the same price, through the stormy sea that brought us here. You may well imagine, that, for six months in the year, should they even succeed in reaching some good doctrines, they are very likely to lose them in the passage home. This is, seriously speaking, an evil of no small magnitude in the islands in general. It is often partially remedied by stated visitations of the ministers of these insulated maritime parishes, or by assistants, or by missionaries, as they are here called; but why Rasay was to be neglected,

I could not discover. I could only discover that there was a good deal of reasonable anger on the subject, and that, in the mean time, the church of Portree was as we found it.

The inn at Portree is a laudable enough inn; but of what use is an inn when you cannot get into it, or if, when in, it is to be in at a meeting of drovers, or of commissioners of taxes, roads, or excise. As to the parliament of drovers, I fear there is no remedy; but in the ordinary and less important matters of life, I suspect that Montesquieu is right; and that the parliament might as well be dispensed with, in these cases, as in that of sundry other parliaments, councils, commissions, sederunts, vestries, boards, Germanic bodies, and what not; because, " les grands tetes se retrecissent," provided there should chance to be any, and that " plus il y a de raisonnement, moins il y a de raison." It is not the confraternity and parliament of Portree drovers alone who may say, " Protestando convenimus, conveniendo competimus, competendo consulimus, in confusione concludimus, conclusa rejicimus, et salutem patriæ consideramus, per consilia lenta, violenta, vinolenta." A parliament is a most respectable and worthy body; and so is an amateur orchestra; when the bows of the dilettantes are well greased. " Un grand talent pour le silence" is the first of qualifications. So I turned from the councils of the interior to those out of doors.

It is wrong to turn up our noses at these drovers and feeders, and farmers, as the inexperienced are apt to do when they become embayed in such an affair as *this*. Have I not sat over the fume of tobacco, and amid the steam of hot whisky, to listen to prices, and bone, and breed, and ribs, and weight, and pedigree, till I could almost have bought and sold a stot myself, purely out of respect to the dignity and antiquity of this science. And

is it for such as you and me to crook our lip at a chieftain of five thousand a year, because he drives his own stirks to market, and can trace the points and consanguinity of every bull at the fair. Did not the Vituli and Porcii and Vitellii and Tauri and Capræ of ancient Rome, families high as even Clan Alpin or Clan Colla, spring fro mbulls and calves and hogs and goats; as the Pisones, Lentuli, Fabii, and Cicerones, derived their origin from pease and beans. And was not Romulus a shepherd, and David, and Diocletian; to say nothing of Endymion and Paris and Argus and Polyphemus and Apollo. And therefore I took refuge from the Lairds and Chiefs in the opener element of the fair itself. And then the cows and the queys and the stots and the stirks began to bellow and roar and whisk their tails, and the sellers of cows and the buyers of cows began to compete for the mastery, and all the town began to look like a stable, and I had nothing to do but to leave them to poke about their horns, and bellow down the Highland drovers, if they could, or remain to be daubed by the whisking of cows' tails in Portree myself.

It is hard to escape thus free from the perils of the waters, only to fall into perils by land. And therefore I took refuge among the tenants of the church-yard, trusting that the spirit of pugnacity had, there at least, yielded at last to the great King of peace. But if the dead were as them that sleep, assuredly the pugnacious spirit of the living Highlander was not yet extinct in Portree churchyard. Nor is it sleeping among this race. They seem quite as "μάχιμοι" as in the days recorded by Herodian. In the good old times, no meeting of these idle worthies ever took place without terminating in a battle; no matter whether it was a wedding, a funeral, or a merry-making. I say wrong: in the latter case, a special provision against war, was sometimes made by each man's sticking his naked

dirk in the convivial board beside him; a pacific feast, which, by a figure of speech well known to grammarians, was called the feast of knives. All other congregations were attended by a rabble of boys, who used to collect to see the sport; as, in our degenerate days, they throng to witness the milk and water issue of a boxing match. It is still amusing to listen to the coolness with which they talk of some of those adventures. When I was walking with John Mac Intyre in Glen Tilt, on an occasion I formerly mentioned, and had asked the English name of Alt na marag, I was informed that it was the Pudding burn; because it was there they had "let his puddings out." Let his puddings out! a matter, apparently, of as much indifference, as if they had been stuffed with oatmeal and worn in his pocket. But to return to Portree, for what the meeting met, I do not know; but as no cause of dissention arose naturally out of the case, one man thought fit to draw the line that was to ascertain his own grave; now, or hereafter, as it might happen; a mode of acquiring property not provided for by Grotius or Vattel. This declaratory act was soon followed by similar ones on the part of his neighbours; and whether there were more men than graves, that it was ground "on which the numbers could not try the cause," or whether the situation of some of these eventual freeholds was more sunny, or the grass which they produced more fresh than that of others, so it was, that they went together by ears for possession which would not have been long visionary in the days of the Clymore and Skian. To have established an incontrovertible right of seisin and occupation, could have offered little consolation to the victor; unless indeed, glory, living, as the rhymes have it, in story, was to compensate him for adding his own carcase to the heap of more valuable dust, which he was thus ambitious of enjoying in posthumous and eventual security. Nations,

who have been foolishly accused of warring without wants, or of wanting reasons for war, might take a hint from the battle of Portree: where subjects like Nootka Sound are not attainable, or when they have exhausted all the motives which Swift has so kindly offered them.

But as I have now brought you to new lands, it is but right, according to the laudable rule of travellers, to give you a geographical description of Sky. If it is as lively as Mr. Guthrie's, you cannot complain. This first of the Scottish islands, is about forty-five miles in length, with a mean breadth of fifteen; and therefore, is as large as many an English county; but it is so indented by sea lochs as to have a far less superficial area than those dimensions would give. There is scarcely, indeed, a point in it that is five miles from the sea, on some quarter or other. As it is scarcely a musket-shot from the mainland, at the Kyle Rich, an expedition to Sky is not of the formidable or romantic character which is commonly supposed. The Cockneys indeed, must imagine it placed, no one knows where; in the clouds, perhaps, from its name; since, accosting a friend at a review in Hyde Park, not very long ago, who had just arrived from it, the persons around began to examine him from head to foot; expecting, possibly, that he wore his head under his arm, and had a trap-door in his stomach, like the inhabitants of the dog-star.

The first impression which a stranger feels on landing in this island, is that of a savage, bare, brown, hideous land; cold, cheerless, and deserted; without even the attraction of grand or picturesque features. First impressions of this kind are seldom so false; as it contains great variety of beauty, and, in scenes of romantic grandeur, yields to no land. Though a mountainous country, it presents a considerable diversity, both of elevation and character; yet it possesses no level ground, except

the plain of Kilmuir, in the north, and a small tract at Bracadale.

Glamich, near Sconser, and Ben na Cailich, near Broadford, are among the most conspicuous of the central mountains, which all rise to between 2000 and 3000 feet. The forms are, in general, conical, or tamely rounded, and disagreeably distinct; as if so many independent hills had been jumbled together: nor is there any ruggedness of outline, or depth of precipice, to vary the general insipidity. The peculiar shapes of these mountains arise from the same cause as their cheerless aspect of barrenness; the mouldering rocks of the summit descending along their sides in streams, and often covering the whole declivities with one continuous coat of stones and gravel. Of a few, the colour of this rubbish is grey; but, throughout the greater part, it is of a reddish-brown; adding much to the desolate and disagreeable effect of the whole. Another group, varied by ravines and precipices, covered with scattered woods, and of a very picturesque character, occupies the division nearest to the mainland, ranging to 2000 feet in height. But the highest group, as well as the most rugged, is that to the south, including the Cuchullin hills and Blaven; distinguished from the preceding by its dark, leaden, and stormy colour; a hue which it retains even in sun-shine and a clear sky. The ridge from Portree northward, is also mountainous; but although as high as the hills of the Kyle, it does not produce the same effect, on account of its nearly unbroken continuity.

The remainder of the island, with few exceptions, is a hilly moorland, generally of an elevation ranging from 500 to 1000 feet, barren, brown, and rugged. The promontory of Sleat possesses the most of this rude character. It is a natural consequence of such a disposition, that the far greater portion of Sky should be allotted to

pasture; nor is there, perhaps, any where in Scotland, in the same space, so large a proportion of land utterly without value. Cattle form the main object of pasturage; and those of this island are noted for their good qualities. The usual system of Highland agriculture is pursued in the lands that admit of it; and these are found only along the sea-shores; the largest arable districts being the shores of Sleat and Bracadale, and that of Loch Snizort; in which lies the plain of Kilmuir, emphatically called the granary of Sky. Elevation, exposure, drainage, and the like collateral circumstances, influence the rural economy of this island, much more than the soil, which is almost every where of the finest quality. Many districts are calcareous; but the far greater portion, nine-tenths perhaps of the island, are of a trap soil, equal to the best parts of Fife. The greater part of this, however, is suffocated either by peat or by stones, or else is swampy and rocky, or is exposed in such a manner to the winds and rains of this most stormy climate, as to have all its fundamental good qualities defeated.

There is an excellent new road from Armadale to Dunvegan and to the Kyle Rich, which lays open the chief part of Sky; and there are other good country roads, which render all the most important communications sufficiently easy. Thus far this island possesses great advantages over Mull. Kelp is manufactured to a considerable extent; but chiefly on the east coast, and in the lochs; as the western and northern sides are formed of high cliffs, and exposed to heavy seas. As is the case elsewhere on the western coast, the population itself is perfectly maritime; as there is scarcely a house that is a quarter of a mile from the sea. It is thus that the country appears a desert on a superficial view; though peopled as highly as it will bear. Of the only four proprietors, Lord Macdonald possesses nearly three-

fourths of the island; and, with the exception of Strathaird, belonging to Macalister, and an estate belonging to Rasay, the remainder is the property of Macleod.

The coast-line of Sky is almost every where rocky, and, very commonly, rude and wild. From Strathaird, all the way round by the west to Portree, it is, with a few exceptions in the lochs, a continued range of cliffs, often rising to three, four, or even to six hundred feet; in a few cases, exceeding even this height. The remainder is rarely very high; but it is every where rocky, and interspersed with headlands and small bays or sinuosities. The rivers are of no note; and, excepting Coruisk, Loch Creich, and Loch Colmkill, there are no lakes that deserve a much higher name than pools. Loch na Caplich is the only one of those that is worthy of notice; and it is rendered so by containing that rare plant the Eriocaulon, known, as a British plant, here only, till I found it in Coll.

The north-east coast, from Portree, is a perfect storehouse of geology. It is not very good seamanship, I admit, to put all the ballast in one boat and all the sail in another; but having nearly foundered under the weight of my last literary and scientific cargo, I have determined to throw all the lumber overboard now, and to carry all the sail I can. Perhaps you may think me overmasted, and in want of a reef now and then; and I will therefore throw you in a hundred weight of ballast at present, as a great favour.

I made the proper apology to "the ladies" for this breach of contract, before. It is impossible that you can have described the view of Edinburgh from Salisbury Craig as you have done, without having heard more than enough of floetz trap and formations and junctions and Huttonians and Wernerians. More than enough—the least is too much; and if you have not heard all this, so much the better for you, Sir Walter. It must be

marvellously intricate, that same Salisbury Craig; for I remember, Sir Walter, leaving college with the sound ringing in my ears, and returning twenty-two years after, to pick up the thread of the argument exactly where I had dropt it, as the mail coachman blew the horn that tore me from the land of cakes and metaphysics. I felt like Jobson after his night's adventure, as if I had awoke just where I fell asleep; and when convinced by the senescence of some of the argumentators, that time had marched on for twenty-two years, and left them just at the same point of the argument, could only say to myself as the devil did when he revisited Spain, "Pardi, je m'y connois bien; on n'a rien changé depuis que je l'ai quitté." The sequel is, that, on this same north-east coast of Sky, there is more knowledge to be gained, without any argument at all, in twenty-two minutes, than in those twenty-two years of Huttonian disputation. Presuming, at the same time, that the spectators can see out of their own eyes. Nothing can exceed the variety, the extent, and the number of these appearances, demonstrating the identity between trap and the produce of volcanoes; nor can any thing excel them in perfection of display. The strata, which belong to a peculiar coal series, are broken, bent, and entangled in the trap rock, in a thousand ways; any one of which would be sufficient to demonstrate the whole theory of trap, except to those gentlemen of overpowering intellects, who have studied at Freyberg and settled with themselves, that "Si non fecisset Papam infallibilem, non fuisset discretus." And now, if you please, we shall proceed to other matters.

This tremendous wall rises abruptly out of the water, for fifteen straight miles, black and perpendicular, to the height of 500 feet and more. The long quiet swell ran foaming over the flat edges of limestone, rising high over

them, and breaking against the cliffs with a fury little expected from its look of captivating but treacherous innocence. But, well practised on these shores, we contrived to land wherever we wished: such it is, boldly to dare, what certainly was never dared before by the boatmen of Sky. Even at a small distance, the whole seems that uniform dark wall which it presents to vessels navigating the Sound; but, on a nearer examination, it is full of variety, and crowded with an endless succession of magnificent and picturesque scenes. The high cliffs, which appear to overhang the water, are occasionally found retiring into the interior, separated from the sea by green and grassy slopes. Stages of cliffs, in succession, occur in some places, where all, at first, appeared perpendicular: at one or two points, gentle descents, and gullies of different forms, lead down to the water's edge; and where the mural line was thought to be uniformly extended, it is found broken into deep recesses and dark bays, separated by far projecting points, and diversified by huge irregular rocks, of the most picturesque forms. It is at the cascade of Holme that these characters become first perceptible; but from Ru na Braddan northwards, almost every point is as various as it is striking and unexpected. This waterfall is rather grand and rude, from its height, rapidity, and ruggedness, than rigidly picturesque.

But the scenery of the Storr, which lies above, is such as to atone for any deficiency of that nature on the sea shore. This is the highest point of the northern ridge of Sky. Toward the east, it presents a range of lofty inland cliffs, broken into irregular shapes, and many hundred feet in height. While the faces of these are marked by projections and recesses, the outline on the sky is equally irregular and picturesque. Below, on the declivity of the hill, stand detached parts, once united to the parent pre-

cipice, but long since separated by the injuries of time. Those immense masses of rock assume the various shapes of pinnacles and towers; and, being irregularly placed, form numerous striking combinations with the cliffs by which they are backed, and with the more distant scenery. Entangled among them, you may wander as in a labyrinth of gigantic buildings; catching, at different points, glimpses of the blue sea far below, of the distant islands, and of the misty mountains of the mainland. Often, when the clouds sailed along and rested on the high point of the Storr, the forms of walls, turrets, and spires, were seen emerging from the driving mist, as a casual breeze arose; while again, as the summits became entangled in the drift, they seemed to rise to unknown and imaginary heights, like the visionary architecture of the supernatural inhabitants of the clouds. Of those detached masses, the pinnacle called the Pote Storr is by far the most remarkable; rising to a height estimated at 160 feet, and, but for a slight degree of curvature, resembling in its proportions a steeple of Gothic architecture. The effect of this insulated rock is very striking: no less from its height, its independence, and the elegance of its form, than from the combinations which it produces with the surrounding scenery, to the wild and gigantic architectural character of which it is so admirably adapted. It forms a sea-mark on this coast, well known to mariners. It might have formed a splendid Monolith for the worship of Hindostan. It is lucky that Toland had never heard of it. The whole of these cliffs produce abundant and brilliant specimens of minerals highly esteemed by mineralogists; and, most particularly, of Chabasite, with which they are absolutely filled.

To the north of Ru na Braddan, the cliffs are frequently columnar, and often extend in long ranges for many miles, with an air of architectural regularity as perfect in

its general effect, if not actually as complete in the details, as the cliffs of Staffa. The altitude continues much the same, seldom if ever falling below 300 feet; and thus, with the same regularity as that far-famed island, producing a natural architecture of six times the dimensions. Of all the hitherto unexplored scenery of the Western Islands, there is little to be compared to this coast. In Staffa, if the load above the pillars produces, in some respects, a good effect, it also gives an air of weight and lumpishness to the general outline. Here, there is no superincumbent load; and the pillars, as they rise, are projected on the sky: thus producing great lightness of effect, as well as an endless diversity of elegance in the outline. Frequently they terminate upwards in pinnacles, either simple, or grouped: the forms of these sometimes resembling those of the analogous objects in the most florid variety, or the Tudor style of Gothic architecture; at others, those of the single spires that bristle upon, and lighten the outline of some of the finest foreign models of an earlier and better age. From the combinations of these delicate outlines, and their continuity with the prolonged narrow and grouped columns below, the imitation of the Gothic style is far more perfect than is that of a Greek style in the arrangements of Staffa; which, after all, is more matter of fancy than reality. To add to the intricacy which every where occurs, in consequence of deep recesses, projecting points, and of the irregular and varied groupings of the columns, parts are occasionally seen, more or less perfectly detached from the general mass; contributing much to the lightness and elegance of the effect, and removing that weight which would otherwise arise from a continuous solid colonnade. Where this occurrence takes place high up in the cliffs, it produces, in a still greater degree, that ease of design which is also the result of the terminating

pinnacles: when it is continued, as it sometimes is, even to the foot of the cliffs, those detached groups and single columns resemble the remains of some ruined portico. This is a feature which occurs no where else among the columnar arrangements in the islands, and which confers a peculiar and distinct character on the scenery here. In one place, a group of this nature commences below by a cluster of pillars, far advanced in face of the cliff; their number diminishing in succession as they rise, till the mass terminates, at the height of 200 feet or more, in a single column; the whole producing a beautiful pyramidal and intricate object, a gigantic pinnacle rather than an obelisk, from which even the fertility of the ancient ecclesiastical architects might have derived valuable hints. In another place, a flat group of similar columns stands advanced in face of the cliff, at a considerable distance; presenting, in particular positions, its narrow edge against the sky, and looking as if the architect had suddenly stopped in the execution of some portico or colonnade of gigantic dimensions.

I have so liberally blamed those who have seen resemblances to Greek architecture where it does not exist, that I ought to be safe in pointing it out where it does. That is the case here, throughout one considerable space, where two classes of rock come into view. The columnar rocks, I need scarcely say, belong to the trap family, as mineralogists call it; or, as the vulgar do, to basalt. To do strict justice to all parties, they are formed of augit-rock. But this great mass lies above a succession of horizontal strata, consisting of limestone chiefly, of different degrees of hardness, and differing in thickness. As the sea attacks those unequally yielding materials, they become marked, so as to resemble courses of masonry; not unfrequently also putting on the appearance of stairs or of huge mouldings. Thus there are

produced horizontal basements from which the columns rise immediately; the contrast being as striking as the whole is an accurate imitation of architecture. At one particular point, where a group of columns thus stands on a substruction of this kind, forming a semicircular mass, the general effect, as well as the proportions, are such as to convey a most lively representation of a Greek temple; not much unlike that of the Sybil at Tivoli, supposing the intercolumniations to be filled with columns, and the cornice removed. The day was most favourable for the effect; the obliquity of the mid-day sun threw the most advantageous lights on every object; catching the prominent parts, at times, at others shining full on some broad colonnade, which was again supported by a deep mass of shadow, interspersed with all the half tints and reflections that arose from the irregularities of the rocks and the brilliancy of the sea below.

A cascade, which falls over these cliffs between Ru na Braddan and Fladda, forms an extraordinary spectacle, and the only one of the kind in this country. It is more striking than picturesque; as the river which produces it starts immediately from the top of the columnar cliff, which is about 300 feet high; being projected in a single spout into the sea, far from the base of the rocks. As it boils and foams below, a boat can pass behind it, and permit us to admire the noise and fury of the falling torrent, untouched. It is not likely that much of it reaches the sea, when the wind blows here as it knows well how to blow in Sky.

The Altavig islands are flat, and afford nothing interesting. In Martin's time, there was a chapel on the greater Altavig, dedicated to St. Turos; but I could not find even its ruins. In the mean time the summer day had advanced to evening before we were well aware, and compelled us to bear up for Rona.

RONA. SKY. LOCH STAFFIN. TRODDA. DUIN. BROADFORD. PABBA. — SCALPA.

In a former expedition to Rona, I had discovered the insufficiency of Blue Bay, and Mackenzie's chart seemed to promise little resource in the other three harbours laid down on the west side of this island. But, with all his merits, I had long discovered that he was not to be depended on as a guide for all the Western Isles: either for good or evil. His survey of Orkney is excellent; but it is abundantly plain that he had taken a very large part of the western coast, and of the islands also, on trust or report. A glaring instance of this occurs near Rasay, where he has omitted a most dangerous sunk rock, lying exactly in the middle of this frequented passage, and not much more than a mile from the very house in which he resided three weeks. The excellence of some parts of his work, and the deserved weight of his general character as a surveyor, thus become, in themselves, an evil, and a trap for the unwary. Were it the fashion to care as much about the hydrography of our own coasts, as about those of New South Shetland, I know not that a much better thing could be done in this department, than to revise Mackenzie's work; while two or three summers well employed, would amend what is erroneous, and supply what is wanting. Having navigated every coast, and entered every harbour laid down in it, chart in hand, you see I claim the privilege of speaking "ex cathedra" on this pilotage.

Why this bay should be called Blue, I do not know, since, like most bays, it is of no colour at all, or just of the chameleon hue which it pleases the elements for the day to allot to it. But the Highlanders do not seem, with all the copiousness of their language, to have abounded in terms for colours. When I was in Sutherland, on one blessed expedition, my horses became wrecked: one of them having foundered in a bog, and the other having lost his sheathing on the rocks. I was consoled by the guide, who assured me that we should find "the Blue horse" to-morrow. But his conspicuity was not the consequence of his colour, as I at first supposed; it was that of his solitary reign, being the only horse which the country contained for seventy miles. He might have been translated into green as well as blue; since the same term, glas, serves for all; but as my memorandum book had a green morocco cover, the guide's knowledge of colours had probably suggested that this translation would not succeed. But, after all, we need not dispute with Donald about his system of colouring, since χλωρὸς seems to have been as accommodating a colour as glas. Green seems indeed to have puzzled better men than the Greeks and the Highlanders; since the Heralds, of whose divine science it is so important a branch, have ascertained, according to Gwillim, that it consists of "more purple and less black." This is better still than the "perso" of Dante and the "purpureus" of his teachers, which have so gravelled the commentators, and which, if you please, we will permit them to settle, together with the green of Gwillim, and the real colouring of Duncan Morison's blue horse.

In running down the shore, we discovered what looked like the Archasig Hirm of the chart; although lying about the middle of the island, whereas he has laid it down at the north end. His draught of it proved

equally conjectural, and we found it a beautiful and spacious bay, with deep water and good clean ground, perfectly land-locked by a small island by which it is covered, and having a double entrance. It is one of the most accessible and secure harbours on this coast, and is so peculiarly convenient for vessels making this passage in short days, when there is no other anchorage nearer than Portree, or for those going round Sky, that it well deserves to be better known. That it was known to some of the coasting vessels, we soon discovered; as we had not long dropped our anchor when there came in, by the north entrance, a vessel loaded with deals from Norway. She was a large ill-found sloop, and seemed water-logged and in distress, her gunwale being near the water's edge. But, on going on board, we found this was a piece of Irish economy. She was navigated by three as perfect Paddies as I ever saw, who had brought her on, thus far, from Norway, in this condition, determined that she should carry double; as, whatever else might happen, she could not sink. If she was in the habit of making trips of this kind, assuredly her crew was not born to be drowned.

It is probable that this very harbour is Dean Monro's "haven for Heiland galeys;" "the same havein being guyed for fostering of theives, ruggers, and reivars, till a nail, upon the peilling and spulzeing of poure pepill." Nor is there any reason to doubt the Dean's authority in a point of this kind; though, as I have already said, his book is a very meagre and incorrect performance. In his geography, he jumps from Lismore to Isla, and from Sky to Barra Head, and then to Pol Ewe. His information is as scanty as it is inaccurate and ill arranged; and did he not assert the fact, we might almost doubt that he had visited the Islands. He describes Iona, certainly not like a man who had seen it: and though this ought to have formed a main object of his pursuit, if any thing did, he

overlooks churches and chapels every where. Martin notices a far greater number. It is much to be regretted that he was so shallow a Dean; as he lived at a time when information on the condition of the Islands would have been really valuable.

Rona is about five miles long and one broad, forming a sort of high irregular ridge, and separated from Rasay, to which it belongs, by a strait just passable for vessels, in which are situated the small island Maltey and some islets of less note. The surface is a continued succession of projecting grey rocks, interspersed with heath and pasture. It is difficult to imagine any thing more cheerless than the aspect of the islands of this character at a little distance; yet, among the rifts and intervals, scarcely worthy the name of valleys, there are found patches of beautiful green pasture, greener from the contrast, and, now and then, the black hut of some small tenant. The little arable ground which occurs in Rona, surrounds the scattered village that lies at the bottom of this bay, which contains all the population of the island. We were fortunate enough to purchase two fat cows; so that, on the following morning, our deck presented the unamiable spectacle of raw beef under all its forms. Our men, doubtless, thought this a much more entertaining sight than a cargo of minerals; a day to be marked with a white stone. Indeed we had no reason ourselves to be of a different opinion when the roast beef came smoking down the companion ladder, day after day, together with the several occasional interludes of beef steaks and boiled beef, and all the other good things in which a dead bullock abounds. You gentlemen of Scotland, who *live* at home at ease, must not imagine, however, that you are to cruise round the Western Islands upon beef steaks; no, nor on fresh mutton neither. There are no "Siculæ dapes" to repent of here. We must have sought for

some other penance, had we wished for one, than that of the monks who condemned themselves to eating eight meals a day. Duncan, our greasy cook, was as little like Trimalcion's, as to Mr. Ude himself; and we might generally have said of his dishes, as is said in the Adelphi, "hoc salsum est, hoc adustum est." And even Rona is not an Otaheite at all times. But Martinmas, that comes to all, was at hand, and the cows were fat; a fat cow or a fat sheep, from December to August, or even to September, would be as great a phenomenon here, as a rhinoceros. This was the first time in all our voyages that we had ever dined on fresh beef. As to the sheep, they are nothing but a collection of bones and membranes; the lamb is good when it is to be had; but, with fowls, and eggs, and fish, there is no great danger of being starved. Of the fowls, however, I must be allowed to observe, that we had no difficulty in obeying the Lex Fannia, which forbade the citizens to eat a fat fowl. Indeed, our dinners too often resembled those of the Freres Fredons. "Au Lundi, beaulx pois au lard," pease soup, if you please; "au Mardi, force gallettes," biscuits; "au Mercredi, teste de mouton," a singit sheep's head; "au Jeudi, potaiges; et au Samedi, rongeoient les os: et moustarde eternelle parmy;" for that is the seaman's whole sauce, Hervey, ketchup, zoobditty much, caviar, and all. But what are all these evils when the sea is your larder and you are in the middle of it. The first question in the morning was, "what's for dinner"—"nothing." "Heave to then, and put a line over." Thus came cod and many more monsters of the deep, and thus came crabs and lobsters; and if our dinners were not equal to the skimming of Camacho's kettle, nor cooked according to Dr. Kitchener, we were never reduced to a clean pair of spurs, nor a dish of hooks and lines neither.

The beef being salted, we stood back to the coast of Sky, making Loch Staffin. This, which is not even a bay, much less a loch, is named, like Staffa, from its columnar ranges. It is of a different character from the preceding tract, being an open landscape, but far more magnificent. The ranges of hills, in which its character chiefly consists, rise in succession from the sea, in many intricate forms; each crowned with its own cliff of tall columns, and all of them attaining to heights of 1000 and of 1500 feet. From the shore, which is also bounded by colonnades, the land rises in one broad sweep till it meets the first of those hills; after which they are seen overtopping each other; the columns continuing well marked, even while they diminish in the retiring perspective, and producing a variety of scenery which far surpasses, in its extent and grandeur, all that is found in the Basaltic Islands; from which it is also entirely different in character. Inland, there is a sacred lake, a Loch Shiant, the resort of fairies, who have shown more taste than common in the choice of their habitation. Trodda is a small island which lies here, off the point of Hunish; a remarkable object, displaying a long colonnade, at one end of which stands up a single and thin group of detached pillars, resembling, to make a very unpoetical comparison, the chimney of Mr. Maudslay's steam engine. Trodda had once a chapel, dedicated to St. Columba; but, like most others, it is vanished, no one knows how. Martin cannot be mistaken in his enumerations of the churches and chapels in the islands; as he is extremely particular where he has named them, though he has omitted many. Yet it is impossible to discover, even the ruins of nine in ten of them; though after the lapse of little more than a century. They can scarcely have been dissipated by the winds; and they had survived the age of reform. The name Trodda also proves that it must once have been

the resort of the Scandinavian Trolds, or fairies. But of this Mr. Martin seems to have been uninformed.

Fladda Huna, a lower island to the westward of Trodda, had also a chapel dedicated to the same saint. In Martin's time, it had an altar remaining, on which was a blue stone, by which, like the stones of Iona, it was the custom to swear. Besides this command over a Celtic conscience, the blue stone of Fladda Huna controuled the winds; it being necessary only to wash it, to procure a favourable one at any time. This is the very λιθομαντεία of the Greeks; but I shall have occasion hereafter to examine those relics of ancient superstition a little more closely. The pedigree is plain enough, whatever modifications it may have undergone as to the application of the magic. It is not unlikely that the Irish monk with the tremendous name of O'Gorgon, who lies buried here, derived some profit, like the Lapland witches, from thus selling a commodity in which, foul or fair, Sky is never wanting. I have no doubt that this was the very island, and not Lipari, where Æolus lived by selling winds to seamen. If, as the antiquaries whom I quoted some time since have proved, Ulysses visited St. Kilda, or North Rona, or Mona, or Monæda, when he made his excursion to the boundaries of the ocean and the north, it is very natural that he should have touched at Fladda Huna; and bought a bag of breeze. It is a pity that Toland, or Rowlands, or Borlase, had not known of this island; as the proofs would have been rendered more complete than I shall condescend to make them, while they would doubtless have proved that Æolus also was a Druid, and perhaps that even Calypso and her nymphs, who were equally dealers in winds, were nothing more than the nine Druid virgins who were allowed husbands once a year; unless indeed they should have been Lapland witches, who kept "Libs Notus et Auster", and the rest, knotted up

in their garters. Yet the very name O'Gorgon implies an Æolian and classical descent, which can scarcely leave a rational doubt in any sober and judicious mind. Give me as much law as Vallancey has taken, and I will prove it. "And thus castles are built of the heads of fools."

Whether I have thus proved the classical pedigree or not, St. O'Gorgon must be the Æolian saint, the patron of winds; unless St. Nicholas, who is the protector of sailors, should choose to contest that honour with him. How it happened that the patron and the Davy Jones should both have had the same name, the councils have not settled; unless it be that St. Nicholas is Old Nick and Nikur himself, and worshipped on the same principle as he is adored by the Savages, or as the Greeks worshipped Pluto. As to the rest of the fraternity and sisterhood, there are excellent reasons for their several commands; and if the Catholic Church has discovered those themselves, we need not fear to repeat them. If Saint Veronica is the patroness of milliners and mantua-makers, not less reason is there why St. Ann should be the goddess of Joiners, since she sits in a chair. That St. George ought to patronize the Armourers, is as incontrovertible as that St. Sebastian should be the protector of the Bowyers and Fletchers. The Old Maids claim St. Undecimilla, for obvious reasons; and the Cooks St. Lawrence, for more satisfactory ones still; but not for better ones than the Tanners worship St. Bartholomew, the Hackney-coachmen St. Phiacre, the Nailers St. Cloud, and the Oilmen St. Polycarp. Why St. Crispin is good for Shoe-makers, St. Apollonia for the tooth-ach, St. Anthony for pigs, St. Martin for the itch, St. Louis for periwigs, St. Valentine for lovers and the falling sickness, and St. Gallus for geese, I leave you to find out; and you may call in to your aid La Mothe Le Vayer, and Barnaby Googe, should it exceed your own ingenuity.

Whether the chapel on Trodda, with the other apparently eremitical buildings dispersed about the islands, existed before the Catholic times, is, and must remain, uncertain. The structures themselves could not have been older than the date of the expulsion of the Culdees, of St. Columba's own apostolic order. I have already said that the last of these hermits recorded, is the one whom Martin found in Benbecula. In that, as in the islands south of it, the Catholics not only remained after the reformation, but continue to this day, as I have mentioned. But the influence of the Church was at an end, and the monastic system, in all its ramifications, met its natural death.

It is interesting to note the enormous disproportion between the churches of those days and the parishes of the present. Nothing can serve better to give us a notion of the influence and wealth of the Catholic church, even in this wretched country; since, if they did not all maintain ministers or eremites, the very buildings must have drawn largely on the funds of Chiefs, who could never have been very opulent, from what we know of the crowds of followers and clansmen whom they were compelled to maintain, in whole or in part. The same considerations will lead us to form a notion of the influence of religion over the Highlanders, even in the most barbarous times; and indeed there is little else remaining from which we could conjecture whether they had any religion at all. That these churches were built and endowed by the Chiefs, is a necessary consequence of the state of things at that time; were the fact itself not distinctly stated in one case, namely, that of the large donations and repairs to various churches, made by John Lord of the Isles, who died in 1380 and was buried in Oran's chapel in Iona. Had not the people and the inferior Chiefs been of a religious character, neither these buildings nor their inhabitants and

servants could have existed in days so turbulent; whereas, with the exception of the plunder of Rasay from Iona, it does not appear that the property of the Church ever suffered, after the last invasions of the piratical Northmen in the ninth century. Were any thing further necessary to prove the prevalence of religion among the Western Clans, it would be found in those very usages which Martin, living after the Reformation, enumerates as among their superstitions. The most important of those are plainly the relics of Roman Catholic worship or ceremony. He also distinctly tells us, that the fishermen prayed in the various chapels, which were even then in ruins, when commencing, or while engaged on any of their expeditions; while he also describes voluntary service as being regularly performed, as I have lately noticed, even in the chapel of North Rona, then inhabited by only five families. The fishermen's form of prayer, which has been preserved in Kerswell's Liturgy, is a composition which it would be well if they remembered still. It is unfortunate that, with his usual carelessness, Martin has not given us a list of the churches and chapels in all the islands in his time, as he has done with respect to many. Hence, as there is little other authority now on this subject, than his and that of Dean Monro, we are left a good deal to conjectures; yet to conjectures that may be safely made from what is recorded. I have added to the lists of those authors, such specimens as I have found myself, and they had omitted; but as those buildings have utterly disappeared in so many places, the catalogue, even with these amendments, is still very imperfect.

Commencing with the Long Island, it appears from Martin, that there were twenty-five churches and chapels in Lewis; and from other authorities, we know that there were twelve belonging to the establishment of Rowdill in Harris. There also was a kirk in Pabba, according to

Monro, and there were three chapels in Valay, besides two or three more in the other islands that lie between Harris and North Uist. Moreover, there was one in Taransa; but this portion is imperfectly given. In South Uist, there were four parish churches, and three or more chapels, according to Monro and Martin; and as there are five now remaining in Barra, we are sure of that number at least, in this latter island. Monro also informs us that that there were nine chapels in the southern islands, which reach from Vatersa to Barra Head.

Thus the total number ascertained in this division of the islands, the Æbuda maxima, is not less than sixty-six; while both these authors have omitted to notice North Uist and Benbecula. That deficiency cannot now be supplied from investigation; as there are few remains to be seen in those islands where these buildings once abounded, any more than in the two in question. But, comparing the extent of territory and probable population with those of the remainder of this district, it would not be unreasonable to allow fifteen for both; or as many as, in round numbers, would bring the total, for the Long Island, to eighty. This extensive tract is now served by seven parish churches.

Next after the Long Island, I may name St. Kilda, containing three chapels; the Flannan Isles and North Rona, containing one each; Rasay containing a church and a chapel; and four more chapels in the Shiant Isles and in some of the smaller islands about Sky. The total number of those is eleven.

Though Martin was a native of Sky, he has omitted all mention of its churches; but Monro names twelve, which he calls parish churches. That there were chapels also, is certain, because there are remains of some of them still existing. To estimate the number of these, we may perhaps safely take Lewis as a guide, com-

prising a territory less extensive and less fertile; and we shall probably, therefore, be under the mark, in allowing as many chapels as churches for Sky, so as to make the total number twenty-four.

In the same way, Martin has forgotten Mull; but Monro assigns to it seven parish churches. Here also, we may safely double the number, for the purpose of comprising the chapels; while it is more likely to be an estimate in defect than excess. In Tirey and Coll, it appears, by the Statistical Survey, that there are the traces of fifteen chapels. Of the neighbouring small islands, Egg contained two, St. Donnan's and St. Catharine's; while Canna, Ulva, Inch Kenneth, Eorsa, Muck, Rum, and St. Cormac's Isle, each contained at least one chapel, making the total number twenty-four. Iona, the first monastic establishment, possesses still the remains of three churches and chapels, and probably contained many more. It is also probable that more than one should be allowed for the establishment at the Garveloch isles, but I shall here take only four for the whole. The monastery of Oransa would probably also claim more than one; and Colonsa actually contained four chapels. Taking nine for these last islands, we are very sure of being far within the bounds of truth.

Both Martin and Monro have left us very much in the dark about the Argyllshire islands. Lismore, however, contained a cathedral and three churches. Only seven are named for Isla, and these are called parish churches. There are still some chapels to be seen, not in that enumeration; and when the wealth of this island is considered, together with its importance as the chief seat of the Lords of the Isles, it is impossible to doubt that its ecclesiastical buildings must at least have been double or treble the number above given. It cannot be extravagant to allow fourteen for this island. The island of

Nehye, from its name, should also have contained ecclesiastical buildings. It is equally impossible that Jura should have contained but one church, while there were two on the small islands of Cara and Gigha; nor, if eight were allowed for Jura, would it exceed what might reasonably be admitted for such an extensive tract, since it must comprise also the islands of Scarba and Lunga. No notice whatever having been taken of the Slate Islands of this coast, I will not pretend to allot the number, though there is one now on Seil, and it is known that there was one on Kerrera, dedicated to St. Kiaran. But when the extent and fertility of these islands are considered, it is impossible that they could have been without numerous places of worship of some kind; and it is probable that if we could discover them, a considerable number would be added to the catalogue.

The enumerations that have been given of the churches and chapels belonging to the islands of the Clyde, are also imperfect. Arran is said to have contained five parish churches; but were that number far more than doubled, for the purpose of including chapels, it would only be consistent with what we know of those where the records are more perfect. That our knowledge of the religious buildings of Arran is peculiarly deficient, appears probable; partly from its vicinity to Lamlash, which was a parental establishment, as it contained a monastery, and partly from the number known to have existed in the neighbouring island of Bute. In this there were twelve churches and chapels, besides thirty hermitages. If these hermitages were like that of St. Cormac's, of the Shiant Isles, and of the other remote islands, each cell must have had an attached chapel, which would therefore add considerably to the number. Besides these, there were three chapels in this group; one on Inch Marnoch, one on Cumbray, and one on

Sanda; while the monastery on Lamlash must at least reckon for one. This entire district now contains three parish churches.

Reviewing the whole of this enumeration, the number of churches and chapels in the Western Islands, the former existence of which can be proved, either from inspection or good authority, amounts to 204. If there be added, for the omissions, those which may be justified on the grounds already stated, the total should be assuredly not less than 250; and, even then, it is probable that many which have once existed, will remain still unaccounted for, and that, if 300 were assumed as the number, the bounds of truth would not be exceeded. It is possible that the ministers of the insular parishes may know of many which have escaped my research; as, without the aid of traditional knowledge, it is absolutely impossible to discover those obscure remains.

Such was the state of religion here, or, if the terms are convertible, the opulence or extent of the Catholic Church. I do not mean to draw comparisons between the past and present state of things; as the only purpose of this enumeration is to show, that although the people are said to have taken their religion on trust from their Chiefs, as you have yourself observed, it is not likely that they were deficient in its ordinary duties, or in religious belief, whatever that was. The Reformation has replaced all those churches and chapels, with twenty-eight parish churches; and here my episode should end.

But it is worth while to try to discover, or at least to conjecture, what those churches and chapels were. That Iona and Oransa were both of them considerable monastic establishments, splendid and wealthy, when compared with the state and means of the age, needs not be told. It does not seem certain what the nature of the

whole establishment at Rowdill was: but from the magnitude of the church, still remaining, it was probably that which it is said to have been; the seat, if not of a Bishop in our sense of the word, of some Abbot or dignitary with an extensive pastoral charge. The Garveloch Isles, which neither Martin nor any one else has noticed, must evidently have been a monastic establishment, and not a mere cell; a dependency of some consequence. That Lamlash was one, we have the authority of Monro. Thus there seem to have been five establishments of some importance, and all probably of a mixed monastic nature; as it is apparent from the history of Iona, that the regular church government was combined with the jurisdiction of a secular clergy. If that confusion has not been very clearly developed, as it regards Iona, we are very unlikely to clear up the history of Rowdill, and of much more that belongs to this dark question.

In examining the nature of the solitary chapels, generally found in the remote detached islands, the ruins on St. Cormac's isle afford an useful light. It is evident, from the attached cell, that this was an eremitical residence. The same may be inferred of Fladda Huna, from the burial place of its attendant monk, well remembered in Martin's time. That this is, in the same manner, true of all the rest, is equally probable; as, whether these were votive chapels, or dependencies on Iona, they would probably not have been left without attendant servitors or residing hermits. The number of those, in situations incapable of admitting many other inhabitants, on islands so small as probably to have admitted none, seems to have been nearly thirty. But they may have been much more numerous, for the reasons already stated.

It remains yet to account for the great number of the ecclesiastical buildings in the larger islands, amounting assuredly to more than 200. Of those, there were not

less than twenty-five in Lewis. Since, in many of the islands, as in Barra, for example, in Isla, in Sky, and elsewhere, the ruins of some of these are still remaining, it may be concluded, from their limited dimensions, that some of them, at least, were chapels of the same nature; sometimes possibly without attendants, as is still seen in Catholic countries, and generally, perhaps, votive. Some of those in Barra are on so small a scale as to be scarcely more than sufficient to hold three or four persons; giving a reasonable ground for this conjecture. Martin, indeed, in enumerating those of South Uist, distinguishes them into churches and chapels: allowing two of the former and five of the latter. Monro's account, however, differs, as he calls five of them churches. But elsewhere, Martin has left us to guess, where to guess is almost vain. Yet it is impossible to suppose but that some similar proportions must have existed throughout the islands in general; though, where I have been left to pure conjecture, I have allowed only one chapel to each recorded church; as the number of the population, far less in those days than at present, could not have required or justified a greater number of parish churches. That argument indeed is not of much weight. A better one may be derived from the probable wealth of the church, which could not have maintained a large establishment of parish priests. At this moment, there can be no doubt that the agricultural revenue of the islands is far greater than it was under the ancient miserable system of cultivation and pasturage; even were we to put the fisheries out of the question. To add to this, we must take the revenue arising from kelp, as not much less than a third of the total present rental, which could not, even now, well maintain a much larger ecclesiastical establishment than it possesses; although we shall not be far wrong if we take the present value at six times the ancient one. The rich endowments

of Iona, consisting of the thirteen islands enumerated by Dean Monro, do not constitute altogether a large fund. It is true that Iona once derived considerable revenues from Galway, and elsewhere, according to the early writers; but, before the Catholic establishments, these were transferred to Holyrood; nor does it appear that the Church of the Islands, in after times, possessed any foreign revenues. Thus far, and little farther, is it possible to go; and we must therefore conclude, as before, that the parochial establishments were of a limited nature, both with respect to wealth and numbers, and that a large proportion of those buildings were votive chapels, or cells, maintained by small means, and by the occasional testamentary or living donations of pious or repentant Chiefs. To illustrate this, I may here quote the donations of John Lord of the Isles, as recorded in the genealogical history of the Macdonalds, or Clan Colla; being the only document of that kind existing. This pious prince gave large donations to Iona. He also covered the chapels of Eorsa and of Finlagan in Isla, and of an island the present name of which is unknown; giving the furniture requisite for maintaining the service of God, together with that of the Clergy and the Monks. He also built or repaired the Church of the Holy Cross; but where that was, is unknown. I need not attempt to dive deeper into this obscure subject.

Whatever else we may decide on those antiquarian questions, it must be remembered that there was a period in which, from well-known causes, the clergy were in a fair way of getting possession of all the property of the country. If the progress of the early Saxon clergy in England towards this point, was not equalled by those of Ireland and Scotland, yet the seventh century presented a parallel career, even in these countries. This was the age of monks and monastic establishments, parti-

cularly in Ireland; and Bishop Nicolson, whose calmness and soundness of judgment give him great authority on all those questions, says, that the secular and regular clergy of Ireland were then equal to all the rest of the inhabitants. Yet as it is plain that the buildings which I have been describing cannot be of so high an age, and as the history of the Western Islands will not allow us to think that such establishments could then have made so extensive a progress, we must probably fix the period of the power or sway of the church in these islands, at a later date, and, as I have already suggested, at that of the government of the Romish Church, rather than under the time of St. Columba's rule.

I had occasion to notice, on a former occasion, the harmony subsisting between the Protestants and the Catholics in this country; and it is a fact which I presume cannot fail to give pleasure to all parties. This general feeling is strongly confirmed by an event that occurred during the commotions which the year 1780 produced in Scotland on this subject; the Protestants of Inverness having formed an armed association to prevent an attack, which was feared or threatened, against the Catholic Chapel in Strath Glas.

Though I have here noticed the religious character of the ancient Highlanders, as far as it appears to me that it can fairly be inferred from the facts before us and from the very little information which has reached us, and though I have done this for the purpose of counteracting what appears to me a false opinion which has prevailed on this subject, it is one that I have purposely avoided as it relates to modern times. Yet I have scarcely succeeded in omitting all notice of what, I must confess, has always struck me in the character and conduct of this people, as far as I have had opportunities of observation. I did think, that, at this very day, the High-

landers were a religious people. I have thought them peculiarly so, and should have marked them as an exemplary people, as well in their belief and their feelings, as in their conduct and in the practice of religious duties, wherever they have the means of performing these. And I did not think, that although deprived of religious instruction and of education throughout so large a portion of the country, they ever ceased to be anxious for what was unattainable, or ever forgot to make that day which they could not make a day of public prayer, one of rest, and gravity, and serious thought. Thinking thus, I should have been led to say so, had I not been induced to avoid this subject altogether, from fearing that I am either an incompetent judge, or that my prejudices in favour of the moral and religious character of the Highlanders have influenced my judgment. I read in the writings of others, and in reports from authorities which ought not to be deceived, opinions very different from those which I had formed. Still, I know not how to believe that, in former days, their religion was like their politics, obeying the orders of their Chiefs, and changed with as much facility as their dress. If indeed it be now so lax as is represented, and if the people are in a state so grossly negligent and ignorant on this subject as has been said in recent documents that must be considered official, I can only submit my imperfect experience and observation to those of better judges, and add, to that, my regret that it should be the fact. I only hope that the laudable ardour of those pious personages has led them at least to overrate the evil; but, in the mean time, it is my duty to submit, and be silent.

While I was meditating over Mr. O'Gorgon and his hermitage, we opened Duntulm Bay and Castle. There was no occasion to stop here, as my good friend the Major had quitted his lands, and taken the great Stuart

tree, as the only tree on his farm, back to his native Argyllshire. When I talk of making discoveries in this country, as usual, you are perhaps inclined to think of the celebrated voyage of the Badaud down the Seine. It is not a whit the less true that I made a discovery on this very day. Judge of my feelings, as discoverers say, when, in standing down into Loch Snizort, the point of Duin broke on my astonished sight. But those who have eyes do not come hither. A century hence, there will be guides and boats to Duin, as there are now to Staffa; yet that which is not Fingal's cave, will be Cuchullin's, or Oscar's, not mine; because I have lived thirteen hundred years too late to be recorded among the Van Troils and Pennants, or to have a right to my own discoveries. If the columns that form the point of Duin are not absolutely regular, the general effect of columnar regularity is perfect. The whole cliff rises immediately out of the sea; but, as in Staffa, there is also a long projecting double causeway of broken pillars, on which it is easy enough to land. Upwards, the columns terminate on the sky, and the outline is agreeably varied; while the front is beautifully broken into irregular projecting parts and recesses, catching a diversity of lights which produce great richness of effect. The clustering of the pillars, and their unequal heights, while they are productive of great variety, give to this place a character utterly different from that of Staffa, with which, nevertheless, it may be more easily compared than with any similar scene. I estimated the height at 60 or 70 feet, but it may be more considerable. There are three caves in the front, and, being excavated out of the columns, like the great cave of Staffa, they have the same architectural air, but on a less scale. The two larger are about 30 or 40 feet high at the entrance, and perhaps about 20 in breadth; but the third is not above half as large. And here my de-

scription must end, for I could not enter them. So at least my men and myself thought, as there was a considerable sea running on the point. I think that we had encountered worse adventures; but courage is a variable quality.

I ought now, according to the proper order of travelling, to conduct you to the point where we soon found ourselves, to Dunvegan Head, and thus, and thus. But I never bargained to give you the details of the log book. I suppose it has acquired this name from the liveliness of its contents, which bear some resemblance to that of King Log, or a log of wood. Which log book doth contain and announce a pithy, surprising, and pathetic narrative or history of the setting of the foresail and the taking in of the foretopsail, of hauling aft the main sheet and belaying the mizen, of four knots an hour and of two knots an hour, of the first watch and the middle watch, of south-west and north-east, and of observations and dead reckonings, agreeing so well that the log proves the ship to be at the Land's End, the quadrant at Dover, and the lead on the Caskets, hard a-ground. Yet thus quartos are made, and thus they are printed, and thus they are—read, of course. But, as I aspire only to octavo, I shall bring you back, with the transition of the novelists, to Broadford; the movements of my narrative resembling those of the Knight rather than the sober march of the Peon.

The ascent of Ben na Caillich is enough for a hot day. Being there, you wish to be on Ben something else, and then a stage higher, and so on, till you come to the Cuchullin Hills; just as in the climbs we make in this world, political and philosophical. The old lady who is buried under that enormous cairn on its summit, had chosen well for the view; but she was mistaken if she expected to see her own dear land of Norway. And as tradition

says no more about this great cairn, why make more of it? Let it have been erected when, and by whom, and why, it may; it has indeed been an enormous monument; and, having the merit of being the only one in Scotland in such a situation and of such dimensions, it well deserves to have its natural obscurity increased by a tedious antiquarian discussion.

It is certainly possible that this immense cairn may have been erected over a Norwegian Princess, as the Highland tradition says; but we have heard so little of the honours paid to females after the primitive periods of the Scandinavian and German people, that we may be allowed to doubt. The age of Chivalry seems to have expired with them, when, after their settlements in this country, they underwent that revolution of manners which may be considered as a step towards refinement; just as, in parallel circumstances, though far different ones, it vanished with knight errantry and the usages of the round table. It is more likely to have been the cairn and monument of some powerful Chief. I noticed, when speaking generally of Cairns, in Arran, that the magnitude of the heap was commonly a sign of the importance of the personage; a rule which seems to have pervaded all antiquity where this was the fashion of sepulture, and of which the records seem to have been preserved in the Troad as on the plains of Asia. If this was an usage with these almost unknown nations, it was a law of the Scandinavians; and the positive enactments and ascertained fashions of this people, confirm the conjecture as to those from whom they appear to have descended, and whose customs, in so many other points, they preserved. It is said that Odin ordered large barrows to be erected to preserve the memory of Chiefs; and Olaus Wormius, who is our authority for this, says that the tomb of Haco was "Collis spectatæ magnitudinis."

If I were to try to describe the view from Ben na Caillich, I should not do it half as outrageouly as Pennant has: therefore it is superfluous. In truth, it is as little interesting as is well possible. A good Scottish proverb tells us "never to stretch out our arm further than we can pull it back again." I wish it had said, your leg. I ought to have acquired mountain wit enough ere now, not to have tried short cuts down mountains: but instead of that, in ten steps, I found myself on the face of a rock beyond which I could descend no lower; and when I wanted to get back, I could not climb to the point from which I had let myself down. Thus have I seen a sheep lodged for life, and that life not to be a long one. They were a long ten minutes, the longest ten of all my life, before I found a way out of this scrape, and felt myself again at the foot of the old Lady's Cairn.

When I arrived at the inn, I found a council of Highlanders, including Mr. Mackenzie, his maid Christie, the ostler boy, and three or four lime burners, all assembled round two English pedestrians, and all talking together. It was plain enough that the travellers had been asking advice, and that the multitude of counsellors had been giving a great deal too much. In the face of the elder and chief, were marked anxiety, anger, doubt, vexation and impatience, all mixed together in their due proportions; as, among the contest of jarring breezes and currents, produced by Mr. Mackenzie on one hand, and the ostler boy on the other, while the three lime burners blew in as many other directions, and Christie's shrill voice contested with all the rest, his vessel would neither wear nor stay. I could have translated his thoughts about Highlanders into plain English, more than once; as he looked about in vain from one to the other, and was met at every movement by something ever new and ever

irreconcileable to itself and to the opinions of all the others; to say nothing of his own. At last, out came his travelling map, and, in an instant, six hands were in it: all the advisers vociferating their own advices, and bidding fair to dismember the very territories at issue, in this windy war. If I at first wished for the pencil of Wilkie, the next impulse was that of sympathy; and in the broadest English that I could assume, I offered my assistance. But the poor man had lost all the little nap of the temper with which he had entered the council. I saw that he took me for another intermeddling Celt, shamming English. But the charity of the truly virtuous man disdaineth to be quenched by such suspicions. I again proffered my advice, but the gentleman was still sulky. Having formed his own theory about Highlanders, he had evidently forgotten that civility was here intended; that his enemies, as he esteemed them, were at least anxious to put him right, and that a little good humour and discernment might have unravelled and reconciled all the difficulties which good nature and ignorance had united to produce. If he had ever attended a turnpike meeting, or a Common Council, or a Council of War, or the House of Commons, or a Vestry, or the Convention of Sovereigns, or the great Council of Nice, (but then he must have been the Wandering Jew,) he would have known that all councils were alike; except that of Solomon. A third time humanity interfered. "Sir, I wish to go to Loch Carron by Arasaik." I pointed out Loch Carron due north; I showed him that a boat would take him there in four hours: that Arasaik was due south; and that it was thirty miles off by land and water. "But I only wish to go to Loch Carron, and I was directed to go by Arasaik." I agreed that if he was in Cornwall, he might go to Dover by Manchester, (I am sure such a geographer as this must have been a haberdasher); but

that he would not probably take it in his road from London to Dover. How did such a philosopher as this get to Sky at all. It was in vain that I showed him the long, formidable range of blue mountains of this wild coast, and pointed out the openings of the wide lochs. He thought of calling a coach, I doubt not. It was in vain I explained to him his own map—my own map—it was all in vain. So the council terminated by my showing him the way to Arasaik, occupying two days; a road of forty miles to Fort William, and of sixty more to Inverness, and thence to Loch Carron, a villanous bitty of eighty more. Two hundred miles and ten days to Loch Carron, by Arasaik. I hope he found his way, for the honour of Manchester. "The Lord!" said Mr. Mackenzie, puffing out a long whiff of smoke, "did ye e'er see the like of thae English gentry?"

Broadford has no attraction in itself, but it is a convenient point from which to visit the islands of this shore. Pabba is a flat of about three miles in circumference, skirted all round by long ledges of rock, running far out to sea, which render landing very difficult. In former times, according to Dean Monro, it was the seat of robbers and pirates. Guillemon is a very small island, a little further to the north, rocky and nearly inaccessible. Longa is remarkable, from the abruptness of its cliffs, and from its elevation, which does not seem less than two hundred feet. The sea has hollowed the sandstone into caves resembling artificial quarries; like those of Arran and Gilmerton. Scuir Dearg, not far from Longa, is a very small spot, but of similar character. I had occasion to notice the Croulin Isles formerly. One of them is named after Saint Rufus, and may possibly have been an eremitical establishment. Scalpa is an island of more importance; forming a single mountain, about three miles long and two wide, and with an altitude of about a thou-

sand feet. It is divided by a narrow strait from Rasay, as it also is from Sky; and this latter forms a harbour which is a common rendezvous of the herring fleet in the season. These inner channels are enlivened by the frequent passage of coasting vessels, and by numerous boats, employed in fishing, or in keeping up the ordinary communication among the islands. Boats are the stage coaches and the post-chaises of the country; convenient enough when we can command the weather, but forming a most detestable species of general communication, in such a stormy, rainy, uncertain climate. But practice reconciles to every thing; and even the ladies learn to sit quiet, without squalling at every lurch, or laying hold of the sheet or the tiller.

Like Loch Eishort, the Sound of Scalpa abounds in oysters, to which the natives, rich and poor alike, pay no attention. They have the peculiarity of being black, as is the shell: sometimes however they are paler, so as to resemble the colour of diluted ink. They appear to be only a variety of the common kind; deriving that appearance from the dark trap mud in which they are bred. But while on the subject of eating, which, on Homer's authority, is not an unimportant one, I may remark that, though fish abound in the sea about Sky, there is very little variety. This, indeed, is true of the Islands in general; wherever I have seen fish, or eaten fish, or caught fish; and that is every where. There is ling near Barra and near St. Kilda; but, as far as is yet known, no where else. Cod is almost universal; and finer there cannot be. At Gerloch and elsewhere, chiefly on the mainland, it is the subject of a regular fishery for drying, as I formerly remarked; the fishermen supplying them to the capitalist and salter at two-pence a head, as they also do the London smacks. The red cod, of a small size, which is one of the most delicate fish in the sea,

abounds on all the rocky coasts and in the lochs, so as to be taken with the greatest ease. But the most abundant fish in these seas, as it is certainly the worst, is the coal fish, here called sethe and cuddie, according to its age. It is however a most important article for the people; as it forms the chief part of their diet, as far as fish is concerned; while it also furnishes oil for their lamps. In Shetland, it is almost the sole article of food; it is at least the main stay of the people. It ought to be an important fish, as important as a sword in Arabia, if we may judge by the number of its names, which amount to fifteen or more. The skate also frequents some of the coasts, but is far from being common; and it is generally dried without salt, for winter use. Of the gurnards, the grey and the striped one are sufficiently abundant; and so are the piked and the spotted dog-fish. The sea trout is found at the mouths of the rivers; nor is salmon unfrequent whereever there are streams of any size. The grey salmon is also occasionally seen. Eels and trout are the only common fresh-water fish. Of the trout, there are the lake and the river species, which are distinct; and the par is found in some rivers and lakes, as is the char, though more rarely. The perch is still more limited, as is the pike. I once took a mackarel, and once a hake; but these fish are very rare. I also took one specimen of a lamprey hitherto unknown; having thus the merit of having discovered a new fish: and, I think, this completes the general catalogue of fish in the Western Islands; if we except porpoises, and the bottle-nosed whale, with an occasional grampus or fin-fish. It never at least came in our way to see, or hear of, even such common fish as soles, plaice, turbot, whiting, or conger: they are found, but they cannot be very common. The haddock, which might be expected so far north, must also be rare; as we never either caught or saw one. Lobsters and crabs are

to be found in most places; but the natives entirely neglect this fishery, which, in Orkney and in the Pentland Firth, is carried on by the people for the London smacks, with such success as often to produce fifteen or twenty pounds a year to the individuals, at the low prices of two-pence and three-pence each.

And this reminds me that Sky still contains a few deer, and, that although we have now nearly made the tour of the Highlands together, I have never named the noble art of Venery in any of its forms; never spoken of a singular of boars, or a sownder of swine, or a sculk of foxes, of a gagle of geese, a murmuration of starlings, a sege of herons, or an exaltation of larks. This is very unpardonable; particularly as the only idea in general entertainment on the subject of the Highlands, is, that they possess moors and contain moor-fowl; putting aside the expiring virtues of "chivalrous fidelity" and kilts. It is the more unpardonable, as I have been at the trouble of studying Arrian on the breeding and worming of young puppies, in the original Greek. The worst part of this hunting and shooting is, that it is "ars crudelis et tota tragica," as well as a "studium vanum;" a trade pursued, of all times, by bad men, Cain, Lamech, Nimrod, Ismael, Esau, and the like. It is thus that our huntsmen and sportsmen "feræ efficiuntur, et tanquam Actæon, mutantur in naturas belluarum." What would gentle Izaac say to this, when he is impaling a trout upon the top of an impaled worm. But fish have no feeling. I dare-say you think me such a barbarian as never to have shot a grouse: and if that should be true, I have the satisfaction of knowing that there will be none of their ghosts with broken legs and wings, to appear against me in the next world. Be that as it may, this is a bird which is becoming daily more rare in the Islands, and not only in these but throughout the Highlands in general. Sheep

will account for much of this; and sportsmen and the game-laws can explain the rest, I suppose. Except in Lewis, they are extremely rare indeed in the Long Island; more, however, owing to the unfavourable nature of the ground, than to any other cause. They are far from abundant in Sky, Mull, and the other larger islands, though the contrary might be expected; and in the smaller ones they are scarcely found. Jura seemed to me the best stocked of the whole. On the mainland, they are become extremely scarce upon the northwestern coast; as they are, in a general sense, along the whole western shore. The true seat of them now, is the great central district, comprising the estates of the Dukes of Atholl and Gordon, Lord Fife, and Invercauld; which probably includes as many birds as all the rest of Scotland united. Of the inner islands, Arran is the most productive, and probably contains as many as nearly all the remainder, if we except perhaps Lewis. The distribution of the black-cock is very partial, depending, as it does, on the cover of woods; and in the islands, it is chiefly found in Isla, in Mull, and in Arran. As to the Ptarmigan, it is not found at all, as far as I know, in the Islands; being limited chiefly to the highest of the central mountains of the mainland. It is remarkable, though out of our road at present, that Shetland does not contain a single bird; though the grouse is tolerably abundant in two of the islands of Orkney.

Sky, as I just said, still possesses a few red deer; and there are a considerable number in the mountainous part of Lewis; excepting which, and Jura, there are none left in the Islands. A very few are still found in the northwest part of Sutherland, and in Knoydart; and they are protected for sport on the Duke of Gordon's estate in Glen Fiddich. But the great army must be sought in the district above mentioned, where an immense tract

of mountain, appropriated by the Duke of Atholl, has formed a preserve for all the neighbouring estates. The Roe is more dispersed, if less numerous. Its chief seat lately was Dunkeld; but the number have been much thinned, in consequence of the injury to the plantations. On the west coast, and elsewhere, they are occasionally seen where there is wood; but, in the islands, they are found only in Rasay, where they were introduced, but have not multiplied. And thus may end all the information I mean to produce on birds and beasts of the Chace. It is true, that I might have adorned my pages with curlews, badgers, moles, mice, cocksparrows, toads, and hoodie craws. But my able predecessor, Pennant, has done all this to my hand, and to every person's. If that will not do, you may consult the Political Survey, or Guthrie's Grammar; and if neither be at hand, you have only to pick a list out of Goldsmith or the Naturalist's Calendar, and tack it to each island. Sterne purposes to write a book by means of the auxiliary verbs: it is as easy to do it by the categories, "quis, quomodo, quo, quando, quare," and so on. It is easier still on the plan already suggested. "This island contains black cattle, sheep, horses, domestic fowls, dogs, cats, rats, mice, and earwigs. It also produces peat, granite, iron ore, and sandstone; and the inhabitants cultivate corn and potatoes. The sea abounds with fish, and it is three miles long, and placed in lat. 60° 50', long. 42° 16' west of Greenwich."

SKY. STRATH. SLEAT. DUNSCAITH. STRATHAIRD. SPAR CAVE.

As I was riding gingerly along a road which did not admit of rapid movements, I overtook a horse carrying a deal board. If you do not know how this matter is managed, it is done on the true statical principle of the equilibrium; just as Lucian's load was balanced when he acted the part of an ass. The said deal, being slung on one side of a pack saddle, is counterpoised by a pannier full of stones, and trailed along the ground. Persons with no more philosophy than you and I, might perhaps imagine that two deals would counterpoise each other; but I understood that one was a sufficient load for a horse; an argument against which nothing could be offered. As there was a whole ship-load of deal boards to be thus transferred over fifteen miles of a stony track, I proposed to the master mason to screw a Hanoverian truck into the lower end, to diminish the friction and the draught. But this was too much trouble: though the sheave of one of the ship's blocks could have been adapted in half an hour. "It had always been done in the same way." The appointments of these country horses are picturesque, at least; and that is a great merit in the eyes of a tourist. A Highland horse with a bundle of hay on his back, may, when seen through a fog, convey a vague notion of some strange ship under sail. The sprit-sail yard and braces are represented by the crupper, which consists of a pole of four feet long, placed under his tail, and braced forward a midships by two straw ropes. As to the expedient for a bridle, it is well known.

But it is a land of expedients; as all lands will be where there is not much money, and not many shops; and where, what is a much better reason, people are content to go on as they have gone on before. If you do not get the same answer in the Highlands as in the Lowlands, "it will do very weel," or "it will last my time," the principle of action is still the same. It is not to spare the labour of the hands; for it is not difficult to see that a rudder is easier wrought than an oar, or that a plough with a share and a coulter is better than two ploughs, one of which is to carry the coulter and another the share: but it is the labour of thinking which is the heavy burden. Why else should a Highland horse be tethered by a slip knot round his neck, when two knots would secure the same rope round his nose and his ears. The only reason which I can discover, is, that when he chooses to tickle his throat, he puts his foot through the noose, tumbles down, and is hanged. On the very day that I was engaged in studying the equilibration of deal boards, this precise event happened twice, and under my own nose. The one was a beautiful mare of my friend Talisker's. He had bought ten halters, with the hope of superseding this method of strangulation: but it was too much trouble to put the right end on the horses' heads; and the other was therefore circumvented into the usual knot, and applied in the usual manner.

But time mends all things; what it does not mar, at least. I hope it will mend their abominable gates; for of all the petty vexations that a poor horseman is doomed to undergo, this is one that tries his forbearance to the utmost verge. At every half mile, your passage is intercepted by one of these barriers. If you attempt to open it, and do not fall off in the effort, you get entangled between the bars and the dyke, or your horse is caught by the neck, or by the middle, or else he is run through

the body by one of the sharp stakes. In time, you learn patience, and are content to dismount and mount fifty times a day; not without wishing, that, among all their expedients, the Highlanders would discover the expediency of a hinge, or the value of an equilibrium. Let them out-Herod the engineer who first carried one deal on a horse, by carrying two. There cannot possibly be a better return of oats than four for one; except eight, which is better still; and if smoke is most admirable for the lungs and eyes, why fresh air is still more admirable.

Man, it is said, is an imitating animal. So is a monkey. But, in the matter of imitation, the monkey has the advantage over the man, who sacrifices his valuable and inherent principle of mimicry to his—philosophy. The rebel farmer or seaman, who chooses to go on in his old way, in spite of all the better things which he sees around him, is less teachable than this same monkey, who will imitate, even to his loss, if he has the misfortune to have a bad teacher. When Alexander was amusing himself with the conquest of India, he was annoyed by an army of baboons, and only mastered them by causing his soldiers to tie their legs together. Every school boy knows that these docile cousins of the human race followed the example. When an obstinate Yahoo shall become as wise as a baboon, then he will be apprivoisé and polished. The faculty of reasoning is unquestionably a fine thing: when it is accompanied by the presence and is under the controul, of the reasoning faculty.

Even Dr. Johnson's good humour was now and then puzzled by a Highland expedient; and it is amusing enough to listen to the acrimony with which he is still spoken of: not in the Highlands, however, but in the Low Country, ever true to its minatory motto, and even by those who never read his book. And all because he

could not see trees where there were none to be seen. As to the Highlanders, I must say, that the few who have thought fit to be angry, are very ungrateful to him; though the same blindness which prevented him from seeing the trees that really existed, was, possibly, what prevented him from seeing a great deal more that might have been recorded. But, in reality, there is a kindness little to be expected, which runs throughout all his remarks on this country; and there is not one of all his travelling successors, under circumstances very conspicuously improved, who has been inclined to look with such lenity on things that no man can approve. It is but just, however, to both parties, to remark, that, in Sky, so far from being disliked, he is spoken of with regard by the few persons who yet remember him, and that his memory is in respect among those to whom his visit is only matter of tradition. But am not I, even I, writing in the position of Damocles, myself; and who can say that the Cerberean mouth of some rabid Mac Nicol will not also be opened against the mechanician who has been so "ignorant" and "insolent" as to maintain that a strap of leather under a horse's tail was softer than the trunk of a tree.

On parting company with the deal boards, I found myself in a valley which nature certainly meant to be useful and beautiful both; but such cattle as happened to stray that way on a false hypothesis, were destined to find that fields were not invariably meant to contain corn, potatoes, nor grass. They were not, however, deprived of all the benefits of the Church, since they slept in it. I presume they give way to their betters on Sundays. I had heard of such neglect in Scotland, but did not believe. This, however, is not the first or second time that I have found a parish church in the Highlands, open to all the elements as well as to the cattle; nor, as in

this very case, is it unusual for the country people to dilapidate it themselves, and carry off the wood work. In England, this would be called sacrilege; but, by whatever name called, it would not happen. Where nothing is sacred, nothing is respected; and the Highlander treats his church, when he dares, just as he does his church yard. I have been told that such things do not exist; I know very well that they do not occur in Edinburgh. I have been told that they are impossible; which I consider very fortunate. Nor is this inconsistent with what I so lately remarked respecting the religious feelings of this people. The Church, quoad Church, is only so much lime and stone: it is not, any more than the burying-ground, the metaphysical Church. It is the Church when the Minister is present, when it is the house of actual prayer. And, unseemly and incongruous with the religious disposition of the Highlanders as it may appear, it is not unusual for them to break the windows, when intoxicated at the funerals, the frequent irregularities of which I formerly noticed. Where the funeral is not a religious ceremony, the church is no more an object of respect than the ale-house. That such things, however, do not occur often, I know; but it would be more agreeable to be able to say that they never happened.

This valley of Strath serves to remind men of the primitive malediction. Though it is a continuous tract of limestone, it is nearly useless; for nature, very unkindly, neither ploughs, sows, drains, nor encloses. That the soil is calcareous, as well as the rock, is proved by its being covered with the beautiful flowers of the Dryas octo-petala. But it is indifferent what the rock or the soil is, when every thing is covered and suffocated by peat; peat dense as a Suffolk cheese. This, in truth, is the impediment to much of the Highland cultivation and

improvement. The soil is often good, if it could be attained; the bane and antidote are alike obvious; nor is there any excuse when, as is the case here, the covering of peat is not thicker than a plough could cut through. Hereafter, it may be turned loose in Strath; and whenever that happens, this valley, waving with corn, will wonder at its new dress.

Strath presents no small charms for a geologist; but indeed so few persons have seen statuary marble growing any where but in a lapidary's yard, that it deserves the regard of all those who, in these days of universal knowledge, can talk of Thorwaldsen, and Canova, and the Parthenon, in dainty terms; and of studios, and metopes, and hexastyle peristyles, and pronaos, and cella; and who would faint at the sight of the ignoramus who should say Phidias when he ought to say Pheidias. Here, is a considerable quantity of this material, of a very fine, even texture, and of a perfect white. Being much more compact than Carrara marble, it is more hard to cut, and would therefore cost somewhat more in the working. But, in statuary, that is not of the same moment as in architectural ornaments; since the mere labour in the former, bears a small comparative proportion to the time required in adjustments and attention. The countervailing advantage arising from the same cause, is, that it does not retain that white mark from the chisel which is the consequence of a bruise, and which is technically called stunning. In fine draperies, and, more than all, in bas-reliefs, this is a very serious defect; because the bruised and white mark comes precisely where the deepest shadow ought to be; thus entirely deranging the meaning and effect of the work. Hence the marble of Sky is particularly adapted for small works in basso, or indeed in any kind of relief. The texture being compact and splintery, and not granu-

lar, this is also an evident advantage; because the crystalline texture, whenever it is visible, always interferes with the contour, and with that softness of surface which is so estimable in that class of statuary which pretends to follow nature, instead of repeating the iron features and stony skins of Jupiters, and Demigods, and other beings beyond the bounds of humanity. How utterly impossible it is to produce surface in Parian marble, where the crystalline texture is large, I need not say. You must not despise this said science of rocks too much." While it often assists the arts, it may sometimes also throw light on their antiquities. It has done so in the case of Myron's Discobulus. Greece had told us that this work was of bronze; Mr. Townley's was of marble. It might therefore be a Roman copy, or even an Italian one, or, possibly, what would have been better than either, a Greek one. Thus the value of the work was uncertain, till Mr. Quidam showed that it was wrought from Pentelic marble; a fact sufficient to prove that it was neither a Roman nor a modern work, and that it was executed at Athens; probably in the very time of Myron, possibly even by himself.

Strath contains many other varieties of marble, chiefly grey, and well adapted for architecture. But as it presents more valuable geological information than all the marble else in the world, I followed the route of the horses, and, after much bogging and scrambling, found myself near a house that was built and another that was building; seeing, like Don Quixote, the adventure of the deal boards to an end.

As I vainly thought; for there was neither an end to the adventure, nor to the chapter of expedients. The house had three stories, and was fair, and large, and new, and clean; that is, outside. Cuchullin, who emptied rain on it day and night, not by pailfuls, but rivers,

took care of that part. The inside being just the reverse, there was thus a fair average for the whole. The entrance hall, or passage, remaining just as the masons had left it ten years before, was a pool; and a deal board served for a bridge to conduct to the parlour. The floor here had been fitted without being fixed; so that it remained unplaned, gaping at every cranny. A half-crown fell out of my pocket, and rolled away till it sank beneath the stage, like Don Juan. "Ah, never mind," said my worthy host, "there is a good deal of money there." The walls too remained as they had come from the mason's hands, unplastered; except that, instead of being white, they were black as jet. They kept in the smoke effectually; as did the chimney, for not a puff was ever seen to come out of it; but then in return they admitted all the rain. Hence the navigation of the passage; which, as I understood, extended, when it was Gala-day with the storm, to the parlour also. My good host was very much surprised and hurt, that he had an asthma and could not breathe, and that his eyes were always inflamed, so that he could not see; considering that Sky was of so pure and mild an air. I proposed to him to treat with the rain and the smoke, at once. "It was useless to try, for it had been so ever since the house had been built:" "ten years:" the masonry was bad, and therefore he would not allow the house to be finished." "The exposed gable might be slated, or harled." "No, he was determined that nothing more should be done:" and, in the mean time, like Moliere's misanthrope, he had enjoyed the pleasure of abusing the mason every day for ten years. But the ten years of pleasure and patience were expired, and the very deal boards which I had traced hither, were to remedy the evil; by building a new house. The existing one might have been rendered water-tight for ten pounds, and half

as many shillings would have cured it of smoking. Tristram Shandy's door was a joke to this.

How the expedient turned out, it remains for the postscript to say. Three years after, I found a new house; standing by the side of the original, like a calf by its cow; the same bare gable, exposed to the same never ending rains, and all things else fitting. Whether it smoked and leaked also, no one knew; for he could not be "fashed" to leave the old one. When I think of such adventures, I sometimes rub my eyes, and wonder if I have not been dreaming. But that is impossible; for I was there five several years. The house was as black at the last as the first, the passage as much a ditch, the parlour floor as susceptible of half-crowns, and my worthy friend's eyes would have been redder if they could.

In many places, I found the new roads made with lumps of Stilbite. Such sights as these are highly regaling to gentlemen mineralogists, who never saw a mineral except in Mr. Heuland's shop, nor could ever carry one away in their pockets without leaving a guinea in exchange. Sky, to them, is a perfect El Dorado. Talisker is the greatest mine for these matters; abounding particularly in Analcime, but producing many other rare and beautiful Zeolites, and, among others, one which is almost peculiar to this place, and which resembles the finest silk or cotton. Many species are also found along the cliffs further to the southward, and some of them as yet undescribed; but in places where it requires no common dexterity and no common courage to attempt a landing. But whether we collect minerals or not, there is something striking in seeing a beach strewed with specimens enough to stock all the shops in London: to see wealth (since that is wealth which must generally be purchased) soliciting the spectator's hand. I had wit-

nessed a contest, not a month before, at an auction, for a piece of Laumonite as large as an egg, which had been sold for five guineas, and I here stumbled on a mass of it big enough to load a waggon. But even such wealth is not seldom unattended by the punishment of Tantalus. In the same place was a large mass of solid rock, solid and tough withal, as iron; and on looking into a small hole where I could only introduce two fingers, I saw a cavity covered with large and beautiful crystals of one of the rarest Zeolites (ichthyophthalmite): the entire specimen might well have sold for twenty guineas. No ordinary hammer could make the slightest impression on such a mass of matter; it was the fox at the stork's supper, and the specimen still remains to provoke those who may chuse to risk their lives in this place.

No imagination can form a conception of the character of the cliffs of this coast; without thus landing under them. At a very small distance, they are so deceiving, from their simplicity, that they do not seem above a hundred feet high; on account of the want of objects for a scale. The eye, by itself, scarcely distinguishes between a wall of a hundred, and one of a thousand feet high. Hence, the bases of these cliffs appear to be strewed only with pebbles and gravel; pebbles, which on landing, are found to be as large as ordinary houses, and the whole tumbled together in such a heap of fearful ruins, as to convey an idea of the destructive power of the elements, far greater than any other appearances which I ever witnessed. Often deceived in judging of magnitude and distance on these Western Shores, I recollect no place where we experienced more surprise. We had left the vessel to row to the shore, which every one thought was a mile off. That mile was not less than eight or nine; it cost us three hours of hard exertion. As we approached, I saw a stony beach, which seemed to admit

of landing, and which appeared about a hundred yards long. The landing being effected, the crew soon disappeared among stones which they had purposed to convert into ballast; and it required the labour of an hour to traverse the imaginary hundred yards, which were not less than a mile and a half.

Coal is not unknown in Sky, and has, as usual, excited much anxiety. At Portree, even some tons were raised; but, being entangled in the trap, it was soon exhausted. Generally, it is true that the appearances of this nature are scanty and without value, from the same cause; and that, in Trotternish, where alone this coal is stratified among the usual rocks, it is so disturbed and intersected by veins of trap, while it is at the same time disposed in thin beds, that it never can be worth the expense of working.

The people talk of volcanoes in Sky. That is a favourite piece of Geology with them every where; and they have often applied it, as I formerly observed, to the Vitrified Forts. It is true enough that there are no volcanoes burning; nor are there any marks of extinguished craters; and yet the Highland philosophy is not very far wrong. With little other exceptions than Sleat, Strathaird, Broadford, Strath, and a part of Trotternish, the whole country has a truly volcanic appearance, and, being of trap, is, in reality, the produce of ancient fires. The most careless or vulgar eye would decide, without hesitation, that the western cliffs were of this nature; as, in colour, form, and disposition, alike, they appear as if they had just issued from a glass-house or a brick-kiln. Because all this is so obvious, that he who runs may read, the geologists who, for the honour of their trade, always choose the other handle, are of the contrary opinion. Peace be to them. The columnar rocks, of course, all belong to this class; and, in varieties of the whole tribe,

no place, perhaps, in the entire world, outdoes Sky, which is, indeed, in every sense, a mine of knowledge in this science.

Though the interior of Sleat is a rude moorland, the eastern coast displays a continued succession of tolerably good Highland farming, with occasional ash trees skirting the shores, on the sheltered sides of the rivulets and ravines; while it also affords fine views of the noble and picturesque screen of hills that forms the opposite mainland. Loch Oransa is an excellent harbour, and Mr. Macdonald's shop of all trades and wares will supply whatever can be required to repair the worn-out traveller. The island furnishes rare minerals to the mineralogist, and rare crabs to the crabologist. They are not the worst of this genus which crawl blue into the basket at night, and are found red on the breakfast table the next morning. The Castle of Knock was probably of importance in former days. The position is strong, on a high sea promontory; but what remains of the building does not retain any great marks of strength. Armadale, which is the only other point worth noticing, cannot be called picturesque, as the land is without features. The view of the opposite mountains is, however, fine. The progress and beauty of the plantations serve to demonstrate, that, of the two main requisites to success, Nature would, in very many places, do her duty, if man would but perform his. 'When you intend to build, says Cato, deliberate long; and then it is often likely that you will not build at all. When planting is in question, do not deliberate a moment. If the success of the plantations at Armadale prove that the latter maxim has been duly followed and duly rewarded, that of the new castle will also prove, that, of the two main requisites to castle building, it is in vain for the owner to furnish liberality, if his architect cannot supply taste. It would be a problem to ascertain

what notions some of these gentlemen have formed of the Gothic styles; but poor Scotland seems destined to be eternally ridden by the night-mare of architecture.

Where nature is penurious, it is indeed penury; where she gives, it is in useless or overwhelming profusion. Thus, of the hundred bays and creeks of Sleat, as of five hundred more, it may safely be said that they are known only to the gulls; there is not one of them all, which, were it at Brighton or Scarborough, would not be a place for opulence to ornament and boats to shelter in. Thus of the islands; which swarm every where, like autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa, about these deserted and unhappy regions. Why cannot these things be intermixed. A German King's estate is all sand; that of a Highland Chief is all bog. A happy amalgamation might render both of them Yorkshire country gentlemen. Nature refuses to Shetland as much wood as would make a tooth-pick; and she choaks America with forests. By way of compensation, she has given the former more harbours than lie all the way from the Downs to the Yellow Sea; for what purpose, it would be hard to say. As to cascades and rivers, the proverb may be taken literally enough; since it rains and pours enough of both in half a Highland county, to fertilize Yemen the Happy, and to render camels as useless as baboons. The western shore of Sleat is much more beautiful than the eastern, presenting a succession of bays and of finely undulating land. Gillan, Daalvil, Dunscaich, and Ord, are very pleasing spots; combining beauty of distant scenery with variety of ground, and with the power of expatiating over a considerable tract, instead of being imprisoned between the mountains and the sea, or set down in the midst of interminable moors. The distant prospect is truly magnificent, from the whole of this coast; displaying the dark and noble forms of the Cuchullin hills, and of the

still more striking Blaven, backed by the remoter group which constitutes the central mountainous tract of Sky. An extensive wood, chiefly of ash, of considerable antiquity, but fast wearing away, since entirely neglected, not only adds beauty to this part of the island, but serves to prove what art might do in ornamenting and improving the country.

Enough of the castle of Dunscaich remains, to render it still a picturesque object. The rock on which it stands is detached from the shore, but by a chasm so narrow as to have admitted of a bridge of communication, which, containing an aperture or discontinuity in the middle, has served the purpose of a drawbridge. No more is known of the date of this building than of others in this country; but, from its general aspect, it can scarcely be supposed three centuries old. The masonry is of a character which is never found in the Highlands, of a distant date. It can only, however, be considered as a castellated mansion; as it does not afford room to accommodate more than the ordinary retinue of a chief. The very name of Dunscaich reminds us, of course, of Cuchullin and his "lonely sunbeam." The true enthusiast in Ossian, to whom date, style, manners, and every thing else, are nothing, who, like the lover, would annihilate even time when it stands in the way of his hypothesis, may be permitted here to worship Bragela, or the King of the Isle of Mist, or Macpherson, or all three.

But Vallancey says that Cuchullin was not King of the Isle of Mist, and that he has usurped the place of King Mannanan in the poems. This enchanter is the real King of the Mists; while he is also the Pagan Neptune, the God of the Sea. My former genealogy was wrong: Lear, or Lir, his father, is the sea itself, not a two-legged man. Truth is a beautiful substance: when we can fish it out. It is plain that the Highlanders must resign all

claims to Ossian. For it is certain that he was a Persian Magus, or Druid, or Vates. Le Brun says that he was the direct son of Adam. But Le Brun mistook Aiam for Adam: a trifling error. The Persians and the Guebres considered him a Divine Prophet; and that was the reason, says Col. Charles Vallancey, F.S.A. and member of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, why the Christians mistook him for the Messiah. As to his Highland father, Fingal, or Fin Mac Coul, there must be some error in the parentage: unless indeed he was Adam. Which could not well be; because he was the son of Kishtab, of the Pishdadan dynasty of Persia, and was killed by Rustam the Persian Hercules. So that Mr. James Macpherson and Dr. Blair must be incorrect, when they say that he fought with Caracalla. The Poems of Ossian are therefore Persian, after all: so that we have been quarrelling about the property, for this half century, to little purpose. There cannot remain a doubt in any rational mind; because Simon Brec, or Siim Breac, was Hercules; and because this very Simon "probably" commanded a ship which was "probably" called the Sun, which, in Irish, is Grian, and "probably" carried off some ships from the islands of Elisha, vulgarly called Greece, which being "probably" covered with Cowhides, gave rise to the fable of Geryon and the Cows. Four probables make one certain. And thus also it is proved that the Irish are Persians, and that they commanded the Egyptian fleet when Pharaoh pursued the Israelites through the Red Sea. Any man who can doubt the History of Ireland, must be alike divested of sense, reason, judgment, and Hebrew; and be equally unfit to belong to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. Supposing it possible, however, that Vallancey is wrong and Macpherson right, it is more probable that the ruins of one of the Stone Forts on Dunscaich Island, close at

hand, were the real Castle of Cuchullin. Such buildings as that, are likely, at least, to have belonged to the distant times in question.

It is said that there was a vitrified fort at Dunscaich Island. I searched, however, in vain, for any vitrified substances; nor could I find any other traces of works than the stone fort just mentioned, which is sufficiently conspicuous. Yet I will not say that there are no other; as it is frequently very difficult to discover the vitrified walls, when covered, as they often are, with earth and vegetation. When I defended Williams's theory formerly, I ought to have noticed, at the same time, that he had considered these works merely as enclosures for containing the cattle, or the women and children, of an invaded tribe. Not having made fortification his study, he was unaware of the ingenuity of their arrangements, and of the judicious manner in which the ground had been occupied. How important a part of their history this is, I formerly showed. There is a circumstance respecting the paved causeways attached to some of them, which may perhaps assist in proving their remote Celtic origin; if such slender analogies can be at all admitted towards a proof. Isidore informs us that the Carthaginians, whose language proves them to have been a Celtic people, as I have shown elsewhere, were the first who paved their towns; and that, from them, the Romans borrowed this practice, and the art of constructing those roads which have excited the admiration of posterity to this day. It was Appius Claudius Cæcus who first paved Rome, forming the Appian way, 188 years after the expulsion of the Kings; and I formerly remarked the accurate resemblance which the causeway of Noath bore to a Roman road. But to lay much stress on such analogies as this, would be to claim fraternity with Doctor Keating and Siim Breac.

Judging from the buildings themselves, it would appear that, out of the four castles in Sky belonging to Macdonald, those of Knock and Kyle Haken were the most ancient: whether the present or Duntulm is the most recent, it would be difficult to say. Besides these, this family had two other abodes in the island, Mugstot and Armadale. It is not probable that these were all inhabited at once, or even in the same age: but still, as belonging to one family, in one spot of no great extent, they bespeak luxury, such as it was, and abundance of wealth; since they were not mere garrisons or military posts, but dwelling places. Indeed this dynasty, at its several periods, seems to have had a great love of castles; and, instead of one supreme residence or Court, to have lived, at some time or another, in every part of its dominions. I cannot pretend to enumerate the whole of these palaces, or houses, or castles, or whatever they are to be called: nor, of some, is it easy to know whether they belonged originally to the Lords of the Isles, or were built only by the clans that sprung from them, or that established themselves as independent Chiefs. Besides the three in Sky just named, however, the following are, by tradition, supposed to have been, not only built but inhabited, by the Lords of the Isles: some apparently as head-quarters or Courts, others as occasional hunting boxes or country seats. In Mull, Aros unquestionably belonged to them; whether Duart and Loch Buy ever did, or whether there were castles at these places before the present works of the Macleans after they had acquired an independency, remains uncertain. On the opposite shore of Morven, they possessed Ardtorinish and the Castle of Dogs, and probably also, Loch Aline Castle. Tirim Castle, and that of Airdnamurchan, must also be included in the same list. On Torsa, it is known that they possessed one. Kerrera, Dunstaffnage, and

Dunnolly, belonged to Mac Dougall; but that in Loch Swin, that of Loch Tarbet, and others in Cantyre, including Dunavarty, must also have belonged to Mac Donald. In Isla, they had two or three principal residences, besides a castle in the Strait; but these have suffered more than all the rest, as their ruins can scarcely be traced. But I need not go further into an enumeration which demands and presents too much of conjecture.

But I have yet a word to say respecting this important family. If, in the sketch of the History of the Western Isles which I formerly gave, I have followed Abercrombie and Buchanan, it is not from respect to their own belief, or to the fabulous authority from which they have themselves borrowed. The prejudices and the carelessness, or worse, of both these authors, are now too well known; and as to Boethius, who is the father of the whole, it is not too much to say that he is the father of all falsehood. If I was unwilling to enter on minute criticisms on what I then stated as being obscure and hazardous history, it is not too late to do it now. The insurrection of Donald of the Isles in 1461, according to Boece, is stated by Buchanan, with his usual inattention to chronology, as having happened in 1465. It is far from certain, also, that any Lord of the Isles committed the ravages in 1456, which have been related. There could not, at least, have been an insurrection by a Donald of the Isles, either in 1456 or 1461; because the pedigrees show that John was the Regulus at that period. Alexander indeed was the King from 1427 to 1448; and therefore the name is correctly stated in that case. It is indeed possible that mere inaccuracy on the part of Boethius, may have led him to substitute the generic name Donald for John; just as, in other instances, he calls all these princes Donald, even when their names were John or Alexander. But every thing which comes

from his pen is alike suspicious; while, as Pinkerton has remarked, whenever he is at a loss for incidents, he has always recourse to an insurrection and a Donald of the Isles.

Strathaird consists of horizontal strata of sandstone, sometimes calcareous, and intersected by perpendicular trap veins. These are so numerous, that the intervals are often scarcely thicker than the veins themselves; nor does Scotland furnish any parallel example. Those who are fond of rebuses, and charades, the dealers in small wit, who admire a cloud only when it is like a whale or an ousel, may examine the extremity of this promontory. No aid from the imagination is wanting, to see a very perfect bust in profile, executed in a very grand and pure antique manner, and occupying the whole face of the cliff, which is here at least sixty feet high. The style is that of a River God; and, adding the grandeur of the design to the magnitude of the object, and to its position as rising out of the sea, the effect, instead of being ludicrous, is really fine. Ancient Egypt would have pared the remainder of Strathaird as we cut a cheese, and applied the carcase of a Lion or of the Dog star to the point of Aird.

The sandstone of this place seems to have been made on purpose to amuse architects and puzzle geologists. This stone is divided by horizontal fillets into parallel courses, and fluted in the intermediate parts in regular oblique furrows. Had the design been given to a mason, he could not have executed it in any other manner. Nature, indeed, is the better mason of the two in this case; since time, which destroys the work of art, is perpetually employed in repairing this. The action of the weather detects that extraordinary structure, of which she has only laid the germs; so that her work is for ever new. As an architectural ornament, this might be borrowed for

the use of rustic work, with advantage. The vermiculations, and some other ornaments used for this purpose, seem originally to have come from the same source; though artists do not now remember whence they were at first derived; copying what is before them, without concerning themselves about its origin, and, very often, caring as little about its congruity. In the natural waste of many sandstones, these ornaments are produced by the unequal hardness of the substance; and, in many ancient castles built of this rock, it is scarcely possible to avoid thinking that the mason has actually carved those forms which are merely the result of time and weather. The variety which they afford is far more considerable than could be expected. Roslin castle, among many others, presents some singular specimens. I do not, however, mean to justify or recommend this kind of ornament; since, when it goes beyond the simplest hatching, and that, in the basement story only, it seems to me absolutely abominable. That kind which resembles piles of dead men's bones, such as they may be seen in charnel houses, is most particularly detestable: I know not if it be not even worse than the stalactitic ornament; unless, indeed, where this is displayed as it was formerly at Burlington House; where the columns appeared dressed up in wigs, very much like those which Neptune manufactures out of spun-yarn when he is to cross the Line.

Artists have been at a loss to know whence the earliest of our ecclesiastical masons borrowed some of their ornaments. It is not impossible that one of the most conspicuous of the whole, the chevron so general in the soffits of the early Norman arches, may be traced to the same rock, sandstone, though under different circumstances. I have seen the face of a cliff ornamented in this manner, so as to have every appearance of a work of art. Eda, in Orkney, affords one of the most remarkable specimens

that I know. The cause is evident enough; consisting in the manner in which the strata break at right angles to their planes; whence the edges of the different beds in a series, protrude in rows of points, so as exactly to emulate that combination of zigzag lines to which they have possibly given rise.

That which is here possible, is, however, far from certain; as the chevron moulding is of a very remote origin, and may have been merely an accidental combination of obvious lines. Ledwich has shown that it is found in an illuminated Syriac manuscript of the Evangelists, written in 586, where the Saxon arch, as it is commonly called, or the early Norman, is displayed, precisely in the form, and with many of the ornaments familiar to us, such as lozenges, nebules, and quatrefoils, as well as this one. The canopy, or the line which forms the contrasted arch, is also found in these drawings; all of them aiding to prove, and without a possibility, as it would seem, of doubt, that which was formerly said respecting the Oriental origin of our early ecclesiastical architecture; while these examples prove also, that the Norman and round style was derived from the same source as the pointed, and was not an imitation or a corruption of Greek or Roman architecture.

The basaltic veins of this coast are the causes of the numerous caves in which it abounds. In many places, as at the Point of Sleat and in Mull, the including rocks fall away, and leave the veins, like walls, protruding. Here, on the contrary, the veins waste while the cliffs remain; and thus caves are produced. So numerous are they, that many of them have never yet been examined; and hence it is that the celebrated Spar Cave was so long unknown. Another has acquired some celebrity, as having been among the numerous places of temporary refuge to Prince Charles.

Here, it is said, he spent a few days with some of his faithful followers; followers who were then, I believe, all Islanders, and whose attachment was the more noble and generous, because it was in no sense hereditary. It has been often said, as if it were universally true, that the conduct of the Highlanders at that period, was the consequence of their affection for the hereditary line of their beloved monarchs. This cannot be a correct theory, as far as relates to the Islanders, nor to those who, whether on the mainland or in the Islands, had sprung from Norwegian Princes, or had held a regal or baronial state, independent of the Scottish Crown. The Stewarts were Lowlanders, Sassanachs in hereditary odium. Stewarts were imposed on Lorn, after the conquest and forfeiture of one of the most ancient and powerful of the Highland Princes. In 1405, and long before, the Highlanders of the West rebelled against two Roberts, Kings and Stewarts. In 1411, they were opposed, if not beaten, by a Stewart, at Hara Law. James the First, a Stewart, was at eternal war with them, and hanged their Chiefs. So was James the Second, another of the same line of kings. James the Third pursued the same system, and deprived their most potent Chief of his earldom. James the Fourth declared his territories forfeited and annexed to the crown. James the Fifth paid them a visit in person, and imprisoned or forfeited their rebel Chiefs. Their spirit of Chivalry displayed no attachment to unhappy and deserted Mary. James the Sixth deprived the most royal of their Chiefs of Isla, and invaded Lewis to civilize it. If their attachment to the race of Stewart commenced with the First Charles, it soon expired; when they joined in an address to the First George, and had contrived, before that, to make friends of William. It is necessary to make distinctions; it is necessary to seek for other reasons, as far as a large

proportion of the Highlanders was concerned in abetting this cause. If any of these families or Clans showed a heroic attachment to that Charles whom they would willingly have made the Third, it was the more generous; since, to him, they were repaying a protracted and almost uninterrupted series of injuries sustained from his ancestors, by the most perilous kindness. Thus universally to boast, moreover, of hereditary attachment to any monarchy, is to surrender their claims to that ancient independence which they preserved so long, for which they fought so hard, and in which they may so justly glory. He who maintains this doctrine, cannot certainly be a Macdonald, a Macleod, a Macdougal, a Maclean, a Cameron, a Mac Neil, or a Mac Intosh.

The Spar Cave is accessible from the land, but only at low-water. At other times it must be visited by means of a boat; and the avenue or approach, which leads to it, is not the least interesting object in this expedition. Two long walls of smooth and perpendicular rock, stretching far out into the sea, form a maritime and most appropriate vestibule, which conducts the boat through a singular scene of solemn and gloomy stillness, to the entrance of the cave. Those who have been dreaming of naiads and tritons, will however, be disconcerted at finding their way stopped by a scarlet door, but not of coral, which must be opened by a vulgar terrestrial key. Such precautions have been found necessary against the philosophy of those who think a stalactite a specimen of a cave, just as a chip of marble is of the Parthenon. Had this project not been adopted, there would shortly have remained as few ornaments here, as hairs in the tail of Blucher's horse. The first hundred yards after passing this door, are dull enough; being dark, dirty, wet, and dreary; the cave being here, a mere fissure, with parallel walls, and without variety. A large mount

of stalactitical matter then occurs, somewhat resembling a frozen cascade; and, on surmounting it, the whole of the ornamental cave comes at once into view. The effect is brilliant, as well from the sudden contrast, as from the beauty and intricacy of the snow-white ornaments. But those who have made up their minds to see a place as big as Peak's Hole, or the Cave of Antiparos, will be disappointed. It is a beautiful spot, but it is a miniature; a mere toy, to those who have been rambling through all the strange and stupendous caves of the Western Islands. The breadth is only ten feet; and the total length of this ornamented part, including a pool of water which divides it into an outer and an inner portion, does not exceed forty or fifty. The height, where highest, is about the same; but where we enter, it is not more than twelve feet high; and at the further extremity, it also becomes very low for some time before it terminates. The total length, from the external opening to the furthest extremity, is about 250 feet. The ornaments disappear shortly after crossing the pool, not continuing further than about twenty feet; and beyond this, the dark fissure, with the very vein to the waste of which it is owing, is seen to terminate. Of the stalactites, it is proper to say, that they cover the whole of the sides and roof; so that the whole is a mass of intricate and brilliant ornaments; smaller pendents, and fine filaments, often entangled or reticulated in a kind of fillagree work, being intermixed with the more massive forms, and thus producing the effect both of richness and contrast.

It is plain that the sea must have washed out this vein; and that whenever that was done, the water was far deeper at the face of the cliffs than it is now. The fall of materials has raised the shore so as to cause it to retire.

SKY. KYLE RICH. KYLE HAKEN. POLITENESS OF THE HIGHLANDERS. DUNTULM. DUNVEGAN. TALISKER. SOAY.

WHOEVER is the author of St. Ronan's Well, it is very certain, since he appeals to the experience of all his countrymen, that, in Mrs. Meg Dods, he has told neither more nor less than the truth. Be he who he may, you are indebted to him for the next two pages; for, will you believe it, I had actually drawn my pen through the whole, partly from pure cowardice, and partly because I thought the tale incredible. But why should I be more afraid to tell the truth than the author of St. Ronan's Well. If I have suppressed hundreds of adventures, it was not because they were not characteristic of the country, but because I had no one, like you, I beg pardon, like the Author of St. Ronan's, to vouch for the truth of the pictures.

It was early in the morning when Roger and I arrived at the pass; and, winding down the long descent between the mountains of the Kyle Rich, found ourselves in front of the inn. "This is the ferry house." "Aye, aye, ye'll be wanting the ferry, nae doot:" "To be sure; and you can give me some breakfast." "It's the sabbath."—"I know that; but I suppose one may breakfast on the sabbath." "Aye, I'se warn ye—that's a bonny beast."—"It's my Lord's poney." "Aye, I thought it was Roger; I thought I kenn'd his face. And where 'ill ye be gaun." "I am going to Eilan Reoch, and I want some breakfast." "A weel a weel, I dinna ken; Lassie! tak the gentle-

man's horse." No sooner, however, had Mrs. Nicholson taken possession of the gentleman and his horse, and his property also, securing thus the soul and body both of Don Pedro, than all this civility vanished on a sudden; small as it was before. I asked for the ferryman, and the boat, and the tide—she kenn'd naething about the ferry—"Why, I thought you said this was the ferry-house."—"That was true; but the ferry boat was half a mile off, and she had nothing to do with the ferryman, and her husband was not at home, and the ferryboat would not take a horse, and Mrs. Nicholson did not care what became of the horse, or of me, or of the tide."—"Would she not send."—"Na—I might gang and speer myself if I likit."—Good Highland civility, this; particularly to your landlord's friend.—But Mrs. Nicholson said she cared not a baubee for my Lord nor his friends neither.

I was obliged to go and look after the ferryboat myself. When I came there, there was a boat, it is true; but the ferryman was at Church, five miles off, on the other side of the water; he would probably be back by twelve o'clock, or two, or three, or not at all. When I returned to Mrs. Nicholson, the breakfast was not ready. "Where is my breakfast."—"And dev ye want breakfast."—"The deuce is in you."—"Ye manna swear on the sabbath," said the puritanical hag, "but ye'll get your breakfast: Aye, aye, ye's get gude tea and eggs." It was twelve o'clock before this breakfast came; and, instead of tea and eggs, there entered a dirty wooden bowl full of salt herrings and potatoes. This was the very diet with which her villanous ancestry fed the prisoners who were thrust into their dungeons to choak with thirst: and when I remonstrated, she told me that I was "ower fine, and a saut herring was a gude breakfast for ony gentleman, let alone the like o'me." It was impossible to eat salt herrings, after six hour's walking and

riding in a hot summer's day; but that did not exempt me from paying two shillings. In the end, the ferry-boat was not forthcoming, the man was not to be found, he would not carry a horse if he was, I was obliged to go without my breakfast, and finding a man with a cockle-shell of a boat idling along the shore, I left Roger to the mercy of Mrs. Nicholson, and rowed down the strait to Eilan Reoch.

On the next day I returned to claim my horse: and now I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson united; a worthy pair. You have no Mr. Dods in your establishment. Mr. Nicholson immediately opened his battery, and asked me what business I had to leave my horse with him so long, "to eat up all people's grass:" he had a mind to let it go: as he supposed I should never pay for the keep. Now this was a hypothesis Mr. Nicholson had no right to form. "I left my horse at his inn; what was his charge."—"He could not make a charge; grass was very scarce, and he paid, God knows what, for his field." I could only presume that his business was to keep horses and to charge for them. In fact, poor Roger had been turned loose on the sea-shore, to pick up what he could; and Mr. Nicholson, after much calculation, and grumbling and swearing, determined that, as a great favour to Lord Mac Donald's friend, he would condescend to take six shillings for the night's starvation; a sum greater than the annual rent of all the grass which he possessed; muttering again, even when he felt the dulcifying touch of the silver, at "people bringing their horses to eat up all his grass." Thus ended my adventure, as far as Mr. Nicholson's grass was concerned; but here Mrs. Nicholson put in her oar, and supposed I had been "after some of Eilan Reoch's bonny dochters."—"What business had I so long at Eilan Reoch; the lassies were a hantle too bonny for the like o'me, and if she was

Eilan Reoch, nae siccan traveller folk shud gang speiring after her dochters." "She dare-said I kent naething o' My Lord, after a', and should na doot that I had stawn Roger." By this time, Roger seemed to think, as well as I, that he had listened long enough to Meg's eloquence. I saw that he was about to lose his patience and borrow an opprobrious epithet from the female collie, which seemed by its grim visage and muttering snarl, to be well grounded in the family feelings; so I gave him permission, and the triple objurgations of Meg, Sposo, and Cur, pursued us till the sound expired in the whistling of the mountain breeze.

The postscript of this letter comes rather lagging, like the second part of the Winter's Tale or the Astrologer; since it is of two years later in date. But can a postscript of retributive justice ever come too late. "Raro antecedentem," says Horace: sooner or later she treads on the culprit's heel. Two years had elapsed; I chanced to be in an excise boat; it was a beautiful summer evening; the clear yellow sun was shining on the hills of the Kyle; the oaks, as they waved their branches over the high cliffs, were tinged with his last beams; and the tide was pouring, in whirling eddies, through the strait, dark and strong, yet silent, as not a breeze ruffled the surface, which was marked only by the long streaming lines and circles of the current. As our boat glided along under its influence, scarcely requiring the occasional dip of an oar to keep it in the stream, I related this story to my boatmen. The honour of the Highlanders was piqued, and they vowed that Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson were neither Gael nor Scot. "Had I any objection to allow them to make a seizure if they could." They were sure that such a knave as Mr. Nicholson dealt in smuggled whisky — "very possibly." Then hurra, my boys, said the boatswain, pull in shore. The

boat was ashore in an instant, the men dashed into the house, and in a minute three of them re-appeared, each with a large cask of whisky on his shoulder, followed by Mrs. Nicholson, wringing her hands, scolding and crying, all in regular set terms, and then by Mr. Nicholson, threatening them with robbery and revenge. But the style and colour of our long boat told too probable a story; while the application of the talismanic chalk dazzled the eyes of both. "Ye're neither gentlemen nor excisemen," said Mr. Nicholson; "Ye're rogues and thieves," cried the wife; when lo! the awful image of the cutter appeared, with the crown and anchor at the gaff end, gently drifting up the strait. How do you do, Mr. Nicholson, said the boatswain; I hope your grass is recovered: good evening to you, Mrs. Nicholson, said Niell, I hope breakfast will be ready the next time I come. "Sorrow gang wi' ye all," said Mrs. Nicholson. "The deil flee awa with the gaugers—I kent weel he was na a gentleman."

Putting aside the question of retribution in this case, which is merely supplementary and incidental matter, the moral of my history lies open to the day, as much as if it were a real fable. I do not relate it to you because it was an adventure, amid a dearth of matter "to elevate and surprise," as Bayes speaks, but because it is a specimen of character. It is one that cannot be changed too soon, as it surely gives as little pleasure to the seller as to the buyer. How it is to be rectified is another matter. But should any future patriotic Sassanach and writer of tours, desirous of reforming the race of the Meg Dods, and of bringing on himself the poisoned dirk of some Mac Nicol, produce into open day the contents of his journal, he will perhaps take courage by recollecting how Wales has been rectified in a few of these points, by means of "The Book," as it is there called. When the tourists first discovered their way to that country, they

could not easily have found one where they would have encountered more fraud, negligence, and incivility. These events were recorded in the tour books, for the benefit of the next visitors; and thus the Welsh, first learning that honesty and civility were good policy, ended in discovering that it was no less easy than profitable to cast off the savage and the knave.

The very sight of a memorandum book is now sufficient to keep them in order. In an inn where something had gone very wrong, the landlady came into our room, like Niobe, all tears, hoping that we would not put it into "the Book." On another occasion, where I chanced to be drawing, I received some unaccountable civilities from a man who owed me none, and who therefore, being a Welshman, surprised me. He had not however worked without hope of reward, in his own estimation; as he gave me his name, and hoped that I would put him into "the Book." I showed him that it was only a drawing-book; on which Mr. Jones lamented his hard fate, grieving that he was unknown for want of a book. I could console him, only by assuring him that many equally great men had lived before him, as well as before Agamemnon, who had been similarly neglected or forgotten for want of a Book. I recommended to Mr. Jones to write a Book himself, of himself, in praise of himself; which I assured him was a very common and laudable practice. But Mr. Jones lamented that he could not write. I assured him that this could make no difference; as he might easily get another person to write a Book in praise of him; a practice equally well known, and not less laudable; showing him also, that, by the time they had established his fame, he might have learned to write, so as to return the favour.

There is a foul page as well as a fair one in the Book; and our countrymen of Wales have now discovered their

respective values. They have profited accordingly. The Book has done good. Our friends of the Highlands have been flattered into the belief that their page was all sunshine: it will stand the better chance of becoming such, when they have discovered that there is a dark side on which they may be recorded whenever they deserve it. There is a Book that will not flatter. Let us all so perform our parts in this world, that, when that Book shall be opened, we shall look with confidence to find our names written on its fairest page.

I must however do the Highlanders the justice to repeat, that such conduct as this is extremely rare; and that, on the contrary, their general character is that of a civility which includes, alike, the kindness of good feeling and the tone of good manners. National characters must not be taken from Mr. Nicholson, and our Meg was unquestionably a Low Country cousin of your own Meg Dods. The man was a savage; but, as usual, the she tyger was worse; and, I doubt not, had assisted in discomposing the temper of the Highlander. Who could possibly have lived with Meg, and not have suffered. But I feel that I owe my friends a better defence, that they may not be confounded with this "no true Highlander," as the boatswain called him; and they shall not be long without it.

At present, however, we must return to our geography, and to the yet unnoticed Kyles of Sky. From Loch Oransa, as the strait begins to contract, and the mountain declivities descend rapidly to the water, the navigation is entertaining and the scenery beautiful. The landscape on the right hand side is more open and less striking, as the hills of Glen Elg terminate by gentle declivities and low shores; but it is not without interest where the two valleys come down to the sea. On the left hand, it is far more romantic; while the tortuous nature

of the passage, causing the side screens to meet and recede under ever-changing forms, is productive of considerable variety. The hills on this side are an intermixture of bold rocks with green pastures, and with scattered wood and coppice, of birch, oak, and alder. All the forms are grand and broad; nothing trifling or frittered appears, as is too much the case in this class of mountain scenery. As at Loch Cateran also, the eye sweeps at once from the water's edge to the summit of the mountain; the altitude of which is every where beautifully indicated by the successive diminution of the trees and other forms, and by the increasing grey of the air-tint as we pursue the objects from the sea to the outline on the sky. A noon-day sun produces an exquisite disposition of light and shadow; tinging the summits of the woods and trees, and glittering on the grassy protuberances; while the deep hollows, sheltered by projecting rocks and precipices from its rays, are involved in shade or displayed in all the softness of reflected and modified light. Profound and shadowy ravines, rude, broken, and diversified by rocks, mark the passage of waters that are scarcely seen till they have reached the shore; their banks being sprinkled with wood, which, dense below, gradually diminishes in ascending, till a single tree is at last seen perched high aloft, the last out-post of the rude forest. These declivities often terminate in the sea by precipices, in which the oak and the birch are seen starting from every crevice; sometimes nearly trailing their leaves and branches in the water which they overhang, and almost deceiving us into the feeling that we are navigating a fresh-water lake; a deception maintained by the manner in which the land closes in on all sides.

If this species of beauty, this strange mixture of rural and maritime objects, diminishes as we approach the

Kyle Rich, it is well replaced by the unexpected wildness of this narrow and threatening strait. The rocky mountains, rising abruptly on each side to a great height, seem, at first sight, as if they meant to deny a passage. Even when it is opened by advancing, it is fearfully narrow, although the navigation is not attended with either difficulty or danger to the experienced. The rapid stream of the tide is, in fact, sufficient to command a passage, even against the wind; and the difficulty of steerage, arising, in calm weather, from want of way through the water, is removed by keeping a boat or two a-head. Ten thousand whirlpools adorn the surface, intermixed with the streaming lines of the currents and eddies; forming a sort of Charybdis resembling a powerful and rapid inland river rather than an arm of the sea: yet, with every sense of security, the passage of this strait, particularly in baffling winds, is attended with a good deal of excitement, and some little anxiety; sensations which much enhance the romantic effect of the whole scene. Once past, all tide is at an end for a time, and we find ourselves in a wide basin and at peace. The change is effected in a moment; and the feeling is like that which follows the sudden subsidence of a storm.

The Cailleach Stone, formerly mentioned, being one of the best and most frequented anchorages in the passage of the Sounds, is often full of shipping, and is seldom indeed without some vessels at anchor; while it is rare that many ships and boats are not navigating to the north or the south; producing a very lively scene. This is a magnificent basin; and, being land-locked at both entrances, has the appearance of an enormous inland lake. While the Kyle Haken passage lies along the Sky shore, closed in by the approach of the mainland to the island, in a manner resembling the Kyle Rich, this wide and spacious bay, included between them, sweeps away to the

eastward, leading to the entrances of Loch Duich and Loch Long, formerly described.

My orthography of Kyle Rich, reminds me that I owe you, even yourself, Sir Walter, a note. You have repeated, in your Minstrelsy, the tradition of the people on these places; but it is an unfounded one. It is Kyle Rich, the swift straight, not Ree, that of the King: an etymology that would be of no moment, but for the fragment of true and false history, which it involves. It was not, therefore, named after Haco; and I have formerly shown that he was not "pursued and killed here," as he died in his bed in Orkney. That Kyle Haken might, however, have been named from him, is possible enough; from the circumstance of his fleet having anchored at the Cailleach Stone. It is pleasant to see how things meet, and opinions jostle in this world. While I was making this very remark, in passing this very strait, your vessel and mine brushed pinions, like crows; and it would not be very surprising if you had then been employed upon your own edition of the tale.

Though the passage of the Kyle Haken strait is far more spacious than that of the Kyle Rich, it is by no means easy, and is often singularly teasing in head-winds; so much so indeed, that vessels are often defeated in their attempts. If teasing, it is also entertaining; at least, to loungers like us, who are in no hurry, and who are as well entertained with adventures or facts in one place as in another. The whole of these seas, as I formerly remarked, abound with strange tides, and often with very unaccountable ones: here they are peculiarly irregular, yet not very difficult of explanation. The great basin of Loch Alsh, comprising also Loch Duich and Loch Long, must be filled by both apertures, that of the Kyle Rich, and that of Kyle Haken; as the flood comes through both, and, consequently, in opposing di-

rections. The two passages being of unequal dimensions, and also meeting the tide wave at different times, the consequence is, the irregularity in question; which is, of course, visible in the ebbing as in the flowing, though differing in the effects and appearances, in each. The most obvious effect is that of repeated ebbs and flows in the Kyle Haken strait, sometimes lasting even for an hour, before the direction becomes thoroughly established; thus often deceiving vessels as to the real time of the ebb or flood; particularly as the periods do not well obey the moon, being influenced by the nature of the winds without.

There is now an admirable ferry at Kyle Haken, which conducts the Inverness road by Loch Alsh, to Sky, and nearly supersedes that of the Kyle Rich. A road also communicates with Broadford. The air of life given by the ferry houses, and by the boats and vessels perpetually navigating this strait, adds much to the natural beauty of the scenery; which is also further enhanced by the ruins of Kyle Haken, or Moil Castle, as it is sometimes called. No tradition exists respecting the origin or use of this building, although it must, of course, have belonged to the Macdonald. As a dwelling, it must have been very incommodious, being only a single tower, and of small dimensions; and, for that very reason, it could not have been a garrison to command the strait. Whatever the fact may be, the traveller and the artist are much indebted to the projector; as it forms a most essential object in the picture, and is indeed the cause of many distinct landscapes that would not otherwise have existed.

The town of Kyle Haken, though but just founded, and therefore containing but the mere germs of Lord Macdonald's intention, is, notwithstanding, a very interesting object here; its crowded and commodious anchorage, com-

pensating, in life and bustle, for the defects of the city itself. After solitary days or weeks spent in the wild and deserted harbours of these seas, the sight of this place is like a return to life and civilization. The situation is beautiful as well as commodious; for the buildings at least; since they have abundance of room, on an extended gravelly and dry beach: nor is it less so for the shipping, which can lie close in shore, in excellent holding ground, and with perfect security against all weather and winds. The design also appears convenient and good, judging from the drawings; and, being in the form of a single crescent, it is picturesque and neat. The policy is another question. If an agricultural town were not, in itself, an useless, as well as an impolitic contrivance, Kyle Haken is, at any rate, unfit for one; because it has not access to a sufficient tract of good land. It is impossible to discover any use for it, as a town simply. Of the usual business of towns, it can have none; because there is no demand. It is not a very good fishing station; far from it; and if it were, there can be no fishing, on the present system, to furnish such a town with sufficient employment; while the houses, or feus, are far too expensive for the population of this country; for any population that it is ever likely to possess. If it be meant, like Tobermory, to combine fishing with agriculture, bad fishing with bad agriculture, its fate will be that of Tobermory, and of all similar projects. It then becomes what, virtually, such towns must generally be in the Highlands; a congregation of crofters, living by agriculture and fishing united, and not likely to be more prosperous because they are forced into a village; nor more likely to pay the landlord a high rent, when it is all which they can do to pay any rent at all, even when they build their own houses at no expense, either to their landlords

or to themselves. But these are tender points. Where good is intended, it is painful to be obliged to think that it is not likely to be attained. Passing Kyle Haken, the wide sea opens between Sky and the mainland, and all interest is at an end.

Once more, you must make the Knight's movement with me, for why should you be troubled with all my diurnal proceedings. I ought, doubtless, to commence a new letter; to leave a white page on which you might make your annotations and pass your censures. But these blank spaces are like so many dishes without meat; and now that the pretty little birds and beasts of the good old days of the Alduses and Gryphiuses have disappeared in the revolutions of taste, I see no advantage in wasting so much paper, in the present high price of that commodity. So you must even read on.

It was appointed that I should see Duntulm Castle, and it was in vain that I wished to go in the opposite direction. My letters were written; I should be hospitably received by the Major; I was in hospitable hands already; every one knew better than myself what I ought to do, what I wished to do: I could not think of not going to Duntulm to day, or of going any where else, or of putting it off till to-morrow. Like poor Gulliver in the paws of the monkey, I did indeed know but too well that, here as elsewhere, I had nothing to do but to lie still and be crammed with kindness over night, and with passive obedience in the morning. I might rebel, it is true; but we must not quarrel with kind intentions, however oppressive, if it can be avoided. I wish some one would tell our good friends of the Highlands, that a man may be choaked as effectually with turtle as with porridge, if it is to be crammed down his throat with a stick. Our English friends do not take kindly to this treatment;

educated, as they are, in odd notions about liberty, and about the value of time.

In the morning I was ready at six; to breakfast at Duntulm: but my horse was, as usual, in the moor. As nine o'clock struck, the guests straggled down at intervals; just as the vapours of the preceding night cleared away in succession, and rose to mix with the purer breeze that blew over the wild hills of Portree, wafting reproaches which I did not deserve and my host did not feel. Breakfast—no—the fearful morning schalch of camomile whisky was first to be drank: drank—aye, and digested; and then in two hours came the breakfast. Of Highland breakfasts we have all read: we read of many strange things: some of them prove true. At twelve o'clock the breakfast was done. But I was told that I need not hurry; it was only fifteen miles, and I should be there "quite soon enough" if I went at three. There was nothing to see but the ruins of the old castle, and I should see that in five minutes. I might have said that I had come some hundred miles on purpose to see the old castle, and other old castles, and sundry other things older than all the castles in Sky; and that if I spent my time in dining, and breakfasting, and lounging about with my hands in my pockets, listening to the points and prices of stirks, and to all sorts of talk about bullocks, I might as well have remained at home. Thus, however, passed an hour; and then the horse was sent for; and when the horse came, another hour was expended, and, eventually, I got under way at two o'clock. At two o'clock, or long before it, I should have been at Duntulm. He who breakfasts in this country may vainly hope that he shall replace his lapsed time by unusual industry. All the speed that Roger could exert was unable to place me in the "status" from which I had been thrown; I could but do to-morrow what I should

have done to-day; as if to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, did not here always creep on in the same, exact mode, form and manner. The only remedy in such cases, would be to possess one of those horses which Paracelsus proposed to form by extracting the spirit out of two or three, and condensing it into another. But my friend Roger was not a double-distilled horse; and, what was worse, he was that very same "wise" horse of which I spoke formerly, that possessed the troublesome talent of thinking for himself. Had I not lost my road, had Mercury not been misaffected in my geniture, the consequences which flow from a Highland breakfast might not have been completed. Yet there is an advantage in losing your road in the Highlands, because you are sure of finding it again; provided you can understand, the language first, and the directions afterwards. In South Wales or in North Wales, if by any perseverance of effort or civility, you can extract an answer about your road from a genuine Briton, it is either given in such a careless manner as to be useless, or you are fortunate if he does not intentionally deceive you. Nine times out of ten, he will stare in your face and affect not to understand English, rather than render you a service, or be at the trouble of answering your question. The case is far different in the Highlands. It seems, however, to have been otherwise formerly: for in the account of Scotland, in 1670, among the Harleian MS., it is said that the Highlanders "are so currish," that if a stranger inquire the way in English, they will "only" answer in Erse, unless by force of "a cudgel;" which is exactly the process that some travellers have occasionally found it necessary to resort to in North Wales. But, indeed, of Scotland, in general, as well as of the Highlands, I may say, with truth, that the people are almost invariably civil, and anxious to put a traveller right; although it must

be admitted that you are often obliged to pay for your information, as in America, by a particular, if not a true, account of yourself in all your various relations; however little important you may think these are to the inquirer.

It is true, that the miles are somewhat long; and the "bitty," which is a sort of postscript, often contains, as ladies' postscripts have been sometimes said to do, the quintessence of the whole journey. "How many miles to—Duntulm—as on the present occasion."—"Sax and a bitty." You proceed soberly, sure that you have time enough to pass the wolds before dark, and meet another guide to whom you repeat the question.—"It will be about twalve statute miles."—"And how many Scotch." "Oh, there 'ill be gude acht."—"Only eight."—"Na na, acht and a bitty." You find it time then to accelerate your speed, and the next question, perhaps, produces the general answer, "a gay bit:" an undefined space, offering little consolation to those who know its full and possible value. Night now begins to threaten, and you become no less anxious for the real number of miles than for the value of the indefinite bitty. A fresh geographer appears; and after having ridden twelve or fourteen miles, you find that it is still a gay bitty, or a weary lang gait, or that ye'll gang it in an hour; so that the miscalculations of Scotch and statute miles, errors of reckoning, and the bitty put together, have left you more to perform than you had at the commencement of your career. The fact is, that the term mile is out of its place in the Highlands; it is an unknown quantity. In the Lowlands, it is about double that of England; and as the Highlander must, from his very nature, answer every question, a certain number of miles is named at hazard, and the bitty forms a mental reservation for all possible and probable errors; for him as for the Low-

lander, from whom he has borrowed the term and the expedient both.

This is not the only travelling direction, however, by which a Southron is here troubled. We might imagine that the Highlanders, not less than their Lowland neighbours, were an astronomical or a maritime race. If the question is about the direction of a place, the answer is, "by the card"—on the rhumb line. "Which is the way to Fort William, or to Pittenweem," as it may happen, "Ye'll had straght east:"—and that is all the answer you can get, though your road should serpentize, and diverge, and intersect on every point round the compass. Indeed they deal only with the east and the west; and the simplest translation of either is, follow your nose. It is probable, however, that their affection for the term east may have a Druidical origin; as the boy at Mr. Mackenzie's inn desired his barefooted colleague Peggy to ripe the ribs and put the poker east the grate, while another had described a female, whose name he did not know, as the lady who had flowers "east her head."

But the directions for finding roads are not limited to east and west, and miles and bitties. These are direct answers; and who needs be told that no Scot will give a direct answer, if he can find a question to return. "Which is the road." "Belike ye're no acquainted in these parts"—or, "Ye'll be fae the south I'm thinking,"—or, —"and where do ye come fae," and so on, to the end of the traveller's patience. It is not less consolatory to be told, when in doubt, or when you are sure that the matter is utterly impracticable, "Ye canna miss't—keep straght forward." You see the bog before you. "Are there any bogs,"—"Aye, it's rather saft."—"Can I cross the ford."—"Troth, I think ye may."—"But I may be drowned."—"Indeed and it's like."—"How

shall I know."—"Troth, I dinna ken."—"Is this a road."—"Aye, aye, it's a gude cart road, a bonny road."—"Are there any bridges."—"Na—the contractor is failed."—"How am I to get on then."—"O ye canna get on ava."—"Then I can't go."—"Na—ye canna gang this way." So much for the living finger-posts. If you consult the dead, the hand is broken off, or turned the wrong way, or the writing is rubbed out; or else they have made the road, and put off building the bridges till next year.

Whether you lose your road or find it, however, you are sure of civility; and that I may give Meg Dods and her well-mated lord their true place of exceptions in The Book, it is no less true than pleasing to say that this is really a national feature of the Highlanders. Of course, I speak of the lower classes, among whom it is not the result of a code of instructions. It is that true civility which arises from kindness, or good nature: a desire to assist you, or to remove your inconveniences; not that "politesse qui est l'art de se passer des virtus q'uelle imite," nor the Chinese politeness, which is measured by a foot rule, and laid down by law. Wherever I have had to complain of the want of it, it has generally been on the Lowland Border, or in the inns which are frequented by English travellers. You will not deny that the Anglo-Saxons, at least, have a wonderful aptitude in rendering the people about inns, uncivil; as it seems to be canon law among these travellers, that the money which they leave, is sufficient to pay for abuse and accommodation too. It is not wonderful if the Highlanders become thus prepared to repel force by force; and, expecting abuse, whether deserved or not, to forestall the right to it, by neglect. But we must add to this, that as real kindness is not a matter of commerce, it is not wonderful if a Highlander's civility is neither roused nor increased by a shil-

ling, nor that the keepers or the servants of a Highland inn think it unnecessary to do more than render ordinary service for established pay. The politeness of an English inn-keeper or a London waiter, is a matter of statutory enactment, or established regulation; and, however pleasing the deception may be to our feelings, it does not enter into comparison with the facts under consideration.

There is one point in this case, however, which requires some explanation, for the benefit of Southrons. It is the apparent insensibility, and real neglect, of the master of a Highland inn towards his guests. For this, there are two causes; the worst is pride. He is a gentleman; a Donald, or a Mac, or some ramification of some clan. This appears to have been a Celtic disease of all times. Nothing can well be madder than a Welsh Gryffyth in the moment of the Genealogical Oestrus. The inhabitants of Cydathenæa, down to the lowest porter, all pretended to be noble; and, at this day, all the vagabonds of Rennes are descended from the ancient Armorican Barons. Thus, though the Highland inn-keeper knows the full value of your money, he scorns to show it, or to degrade himself by meddling with base commerce. This is absurd enough; and, as it happens, may be either offensive or ludicrous: wise men, (like you and me,) smile at it, and may often find it a source of amusement. In former days, he walked into your room, drank part of your wine, and, if not too magnificent, might have been rendered an entertaining companion. That fashion will succeed no longer: and therefore he is now not seen at all, or he is scornful and proud at the neglect of those whom he perhaps considers his inferiors; base Saxons without a clan. The other cause is the division of labour. Every Highland inn is an appendage to a farm: or the farm is an appendage to the inn; it is pretty much the same thing. The man's busi-

ness is with the farm; and, to the wife, are consigned all the duties within doors. Thus, you see, I have tried to defend my friends of the inns as well as I can: though, as usual, I do not expect many thanks for a defence of what they probably do not choose to acknowledge as a fault.

The bounds between civility and politeness are so indefinite, that I may as well end as I began, and complete the episode which I owe to Meg Dods. The most inattentive traveller must have noticed a certain style in the address and manners of a Highlander, of any and of every rank, of which we have no example, either in the Lowlands of Scotland or in England, even in conditions of life far superior. He will be a bold moralist who shall attempt to define vulgarity; but every one knows what it is, and where it is found, with all the nameless modifications and disguises which it assumes in every rank of life. From this most abstruse and undefinable faculty, a Highlander is free; as far at least as it is possible for a stranger to discover it. It must however be admitted, that we cannot be very competent judges in this cause; from want of sufficient intimacy with the language, manners, and deportment of this people, in all their varieties, and in all their minor and familiar relations among each other. The appearance, such as it is presented to our eyes, may be fallacious, however pleasing; yet I imagine that the higher orders of Highlanders think pretty much like ourselves on this subject. It is certain that we can judge truly of this most base and disgusting quality, only where we are familiar; and that we ourselves have certain canons of judgment respecting it, which are the result of experience only. The vulgarity of a Londoner is, to Londoners, far more appalling than that of a Yorkshireman: and, possibly, the converse may hold true. Assuredly, we discover no such property in a Turk or a

Bedoueen Arab: yet it would be too much to say that it does not exist, and that a porter on the quays of Constantinople is not capable of shocking the feelings of a three-tailed Pacha. We, "nous autres," can see it in a Frenchman; less in a Spaniard; just in proportion as our knowledge of the variety is most intimate. It is equally difficult, and for similar reasons, to calculate on the manners of ancient, or of rude nations. I need not do more than allude to the remarks which I formerly made on the etiquettes, as on the fidelity, of nations in a low stage of civilization. We are as much puzzled with the manners of the Homeric age, in a different way, as we are with the politeness of the ancient Highlanders. Politeness, as we understand it, was not then the fashion; which, on the contrary, was to say whatever was thought, to "call a spade a spade." Their very Gods squabble and box. Yet nothing can exceed the formality of their visits and their messages: there would have been a herald and a "flourish of trumpets" to announce that Dame Partlett had laid an egg, had Achilles expected one for breakfast from the hen wife of Agamemnon. But the subject would admit of an essay, and I must bethink myself that it is not my affair.

Admitting it to be true to a great extent, among the Highlanders, that they are free from vulgarity, as I believe it will unquestionably be found, it is not perhaps very difficult to account for it; and, if that account be a true one, politeness must be classed among the expiring virtues of this country. It is, apparently, the result of the ancient system of clanship; and ill-natured people will attribute it to the servility consequent on that state of things; which has descended even to our own days, though the original bond between chief and people has been completely sundered. But it bears few or none of the marks of servility. The politeness of a Highlander

is frank and open, and as little submissive to neglect or rudeness, as if he had been bred in the court of Spain. It has also been remarked of the lower Highlanders, that their eloquence is bold and free; a feature which may rank with this part of their character, and which has probably originated in the same causes. Such at least it was; for even this feature of their character is thought to be expiring. The descriptions that have been given of it, correspond so precisely to the similar accounts which American travellers have given us of the oratory of the Indians, that we might almost suppose the one had been copied from the other. This ought to be the effect of liberty; and, in a Highlander, it must have been the mark and proof of it. Another remarkable illustration is found in the Arabs. Their speech is concise, slow, and impressive; and "it is from a feeling of his independence and importance, that he is able to converse without awe with his superiors, and to treat his equals without levity." The remark is Gibbon's; and is not the less weighty that he has derived it from the native writers on the manners of this people.

To return to my own theory; such, at least in a certain degree, must have been the freedom and the politeness of a Highlander in ancient times, when the tie between the chief and his people was not that between a tyrant and his slaves, but more in the nature of feudal connexion, of a mutual bond of services rendered for protection given; and when that bond was still closer drawn by the claims, however evanescent, which many individuals had, and which more imagined they possessed, to a common descent, to some connexion at least, however circuitous, or dilute, with the blood of the Chief. Sir J. Dalrymple, however, has given us another theory; and whatever I may think of it, I am bound in justice to give it a place, though in opposition to my own. He considers it, like

the politeness supposed to have been generated in modern days by our own duelling, to have been the result of fear. Every man wore a dirk, says he, and no man dared to be rude to his neighbour, lest he should receive the skene dhu in his wame. And this historian too, is a warm friend to all the virtues of the Highlanders, real and imaginary: "Call you this backing your friends," Sir John? But we must return to the road whence we have strayed: for in spite of east and west and bitties, it was found at last.

It is little interesting till it approaches Duntulm, where, lying high above the cliffs, it impends over a deep sea, skirted on the right, by a tall bulwark of basaltic columns. The Bay of Duntulm is extended far below; its half-ruined castle occupying a projecting and high rocky tongue of land; and the island beyond it, presenting its bold vertical face of cliffs. The Shiant Isles, darkened by a heavy cloud which had just passed the setting sun, came full in view as I emerged from the lofty columnar precipices; and the last of the yellow rays that struggled through its thin edge, were shot slanting along a sea which glittered calm and wide to the utmost verge of the wild mountains of Harris. As I descended on the bay, grey evening enveloped the landscape, and I began to look anxiously for my night's refuge. No house was, however, visible, no sound was heard, no smoke was seen. I listened for the sheep-bell; but in vain: a solitary boat, far out in the darkening bay, gave me little comfort. I proposed to sleep in the ruins of Duntulm. At length I came unexpectedly upon a shepherd, reclining under a rock, with his dog by his side, keenly watching his master's eye that was directed toward the hill. He was a tall, spare, anxious figure, with the coarse grey checked plaid and trousers, a long branch of a tree, for a staff, in his hand, and a Highland bonnet on

his head. I requested a direction to The Major. "I am very glad to see you," was the answer. Had I not been initiated, the Cincinnatus condition of the Major might have troubled me. But we discussed the great Stuart tree, and much more, and some smoked salmon, and some whisky; and had I not been among the adepts, I might still more have marvelled at finding a sensible personage, with the manners and information of a gentleman, enveloped in such a pair of trousers, with such a staff, such a pair of shoes, and such a Major's commission. Such is the disguise which a gentleman assumes in this country. It puzzled Birt, a century ago.

Duntulm Castle was a permanent residence of the Macdonald; and the care bestowed on some architectural ornaments still remaining, proves their high state of former opulence, and, in this country, an unusual attention to comfort: but it is not of very ancient date. There is a watch tower, carved with a rose moulding, resembling that of Gordon Castle, but in better taste. The position is strong; but not anxiously so, as is common in these castellated residences. It is sufficiently entire to convey a perfect idea of the conveniences of a Highland Chief's dwelling; and, even at this late date, and in such a family as this, these were not very great. Tradition still points out the gallows-hill and the dungeon. Whatever tradition may forget, it always takes care to remember the evils of past times: it is the battle and the earthquake which are recorded; the tyrant, the robber, and the warrior, who are embalmed for immortality; while all the peace and tranquillity, the virtuous and the good of those days, if there were such things and such persons, are forgotten.

To compensate for the loss of this day, I had reckoned on a long and useful one to-morrow, because I reckoned with my host; but it is the same here whether you reckon

with your host or without him. Propose as you please, no Highland day will ever begin before two o'clock; and as dinner comes at four, you can easily calculate the number of years requisite for such a tour; which is a great advantage. If there were a portable stable, like the fairies' tent, in which a man could lock up his horse, some advantages might accrue, and one class of evils and delays be remedied. In the morning, Roger was not to be found. How could any horse be found, who had twenty miles to range over, in search of the only green spot in it. Once more it was two o'clock, the ill-omened hour of two, before I was again on the saddle; that fated hour at which, whether from the sinister influences of horse, or man, or breakfast, or talk, or dioch an dorish, or some other thing, it seems fated that all days should commence in this country. In six miles' time, Roger had lost a shoe; in three more, he was lame. Where was the smith: there was no one to ask. At length I espied two damsels; the ugly one, most virtuously ran away; but the Beauty, pretending to blush and hide her face, sat still. The Fair can explain all this. The nymph giggled, as usual, at the English question: but there is no need of language where beauty is concerned. Nature manages these matters in another way. Thus was Roger shod: but when indeed the fire had been lighted, and the iron heated, hammered, formed, nailed, and paid for, the clouds of evening began to roll in from the Shiant Isles, portending rain. In half an hour it did rain; and, witless where I was going, I found myself on the black, wide, wet, shore of Loch Snizort; the tide either at half ebb or half flood, not a house near, nor a man, nor a boat to be seen, and the evening thickening with mist and shadow, while the gulls were settling for the evening in long rows, on the beach, as they came in for shelter before the rising wind. This comes of stabling a horse in a mountain:

rise early or rise late, 'tis all one. How we dodged the tide, and why we were not swallowed up in the black mud of Loch Snizort, Roger best knows. Where he was going, he alone knew; I doubted not that he had a friend somewhere in this wide world, dark as it now was. At length his nose was stopped by a swing gate, as I could hear by the jingling of the latch; and, in a minute more, had the stable door been a little wider, I should not have stuck in the passage. "Ah! Roger, is that you;" said a gentleman who issued from the house. The Yahoo made his best bow, and the Gentleman-Usher was thanked for the introduction by a sieve of oats.

I wish some of my friends would study the Odyssey. They may read it in Pope; if they have forgotten their Greek. The King of the Phæacians, who was probably a kind of Highland Chief, does not choose to detain Ulysses, lest he should offend the Gods: but as there are no Gods in Sky except the goddess Anaitis; and as she has been ousted by the Reformation, it is probable that Roger's present friend had studied in another school. So it was, however, that he understood both parts of hospitality; Χρὴ ξεῖνον παρέοντα φιλεῖν, ἐθέλοντα δὲ πέμπειν. Whether Roger was aware of his peculiar merits, I have not yet discovered. He probably knew that he should find a stable to sleep in, and that he should get his breakfast at nine; for which reason, whenever you wish to save your day in Sky, I recommend you to apply to Roger for an introduction.

It is a dull and dreary ride from Portree to Dunvegan. But this castle gains both on the eye and the imagination, by the previous blank. Nothing can well be more striking than its first effect, as seen at the termination of a wide sweep of bare brown moor, spread far around, without a single object to distract the attention. The red flag was floating in the breeze over the battlements, as it

first caught my eye, and the impression was that of some romance of the ages of chivalry. With no other house or mark of human life to be discerned through the wide waste, it reminds us of the solitary castle of some giant or enchanter, the tyrant and scourge of the surrounding country. As we approach, the building gains more consequence as a castle, if it loses somewhat of the air of romance. Though the country is bare of trees, it is doubtful whether more character would not be lost than gained by such an addition. The magnificent back ground of Loch Follart, covered with islands beautifully dispersed over its bright expanse, and terminated by the fine screen of mountains in which the two singular summits called Macleod's Tables form the principal features, requires no addition.

The antiquity of the oldest part of this castle, which is a work of different dates, is unknown: but it is not likely to be greater than the thirteenth century. It is a simple square tower, with truly Norwegian walls of an enormous thickness. The other parts, added without any determined design, and apparently at different periods, assist in forming with it an outline which is sufficiently picturesque, though without any consistency of style or character. It is situated on a rock of no great elevation, overhanging the sea, separated from the shore by a small space, so as to have been defensible by a kind of dry moat, which is now rendered commodious by a bridge. The fairy flag and Rory More's horn, I must leave to Pennant and Peter Pindar; except that I must remark, that the former is interesting as being a Norwegian superstition. If ever Macleod's heirs were obliged to receive investiture by bumpering that horn, the breed must be woefully degenerated.

In pursuing the journey southward, the road lies through the low and fertile district of Bracadale, which

forms the bottom of a wide bay of that name, improperly called a loch. Not far from the road in this part, are the remains of what appears one of those Norwegian Dunes which occur in Orkney, containing the traces of circular compartments within a circular area. Other fragments of ancient rude walls and barrows, are not very intelligible. One of them, however, in another quarter, is amusing, as showing how a true antiquary can build a castle on a fog of his own raising. Mr. Mac Queen (temp. Johnson) finds that the natives call this place Ainnit, (which means, a place near water, as it happens), and, chancing also to find in Lempriere's dictionary that there was a goddess called Anaitis, worshipped in Lydia, Persia, and Armenia, with a reference to Pliny and Pausanias, immediately becomes very learned, as the phrase is, and determines that this Goddess had a temple in Sky. Learning and antiquarianism both, are cheap purchases, if these are the requisites. The Doctor might have consulted Herodotus, Strabo, and Cœlius Rhodiginus; and thus have become more learned still, on the subject of the Goddess Anaitis. He might have found that her statue was made of gold, and that when Augustus supped with one of his officers, he was informed that he had supped on Anaitis's leg. He might have found — but, Oh, Dr. Mac Queen, how could you ever have imagined that your virtuous Highlanders had worshipped the Goddess Anaitis. It must not be told. What, after all, if he found the whole castle in Colonel Charles Vallancey, where it stands, among the rest.

From Loch Harpart, there is a bad hill-road to Talisker, shortly after which, the country ceases to be passable. This is a most singular and unexpected spot, a green emerald in a land of almost universal brown, with an air of peace and tranquillity, such as no traveller among these islands can have witnessed for many weeks: come from

wherever he may. It conveys the notion of a perfect seclusion from the world; and of one, at the same time, where every thing that a hermitage has to offer, might be enjoyed. It is a green semicircular valley, opening on one side to the sea, and bounded all round by a continuous screen of high hills, so high indeed, that no object is seen beyond them. It is a little world in itself, of which, even the existence would be unsuspected in traversing the country. Some magnificent ash trees, surrounding the house, prove that it might also have been a wooded, or at least an ornamented, place; had the Highlanders of former days thought that trees were either useful or beautiful.

Nothing can be more enticing, more tempting, than those scenes of beauty and retirement which we meet in every part of the Highlands, amid woods, and rocks, and torrents, and green pastures, and on the margins of bright lakes and blue seas; scenes of enchantment and peace, breathing that air of freshness and tranquillity, and holding out that promise of studious ease, or of repose and freedom from care, to which we long to fly from the turmoil and trouble of every-day life. But we forget their inconveniences of every kind, their enormous distances from society, from every resource and every contrast which can render solitude tolerable, which can serve to remind us that it is the solitude of peace and of choice, and not that of banishment. We have, ourselves, but just quitted the war and tumult of towns, the "fumum, strepitumque Romæ," with the impression fresh on our memory; we are, perhaps, to return to it all to-morrow, and we forget that all this peace is not the near neighbour of tumult, and that we have approximated, by our own rapid movements, things which are at an impracticable distance from each other. Could we indeed retire from Grosvenor Square to Talisker when we pleased, and

return when we were weary of ourselves, could we do all this, and more — man would be too happy. So it is said; although what evil is to arise from his happiness, is another question not quite so easy of solution.

The cliffs that surround the entrance of Talisker, are of great height, reaching indeed, in some places, nearly to the surface of the table land above. Some rocky precipices, high perched above the valley, and continued from them, present columnar faces; but the most extensive and beautiful display of this nature, is in the hill of Brish Meal. It is only from the sea, however, that these cliffs can be seen in all their wild and magnificent forms; rising, in some places, to the height of 800 feet, and beautifully diversified in their outlines and interior forms, as well as in their colouring. With little other exception than that of the few sea-lochs by which it is intersected, this coast presents an almost continuous mural line of precipice from Dunvegan Head to Loch Brittle; often attaining a height of 600 or 800 feet, and displaying a great variety of grand and rude scenery. Macleod's Maidens, consisting of three detached conical rocks, standing out at some distance from the cliffs, not far from Loch Bracadale, cannot fail to attract notice. The highest of these appears to be about 200 feet; the forms of the whole being very graceful. This inlet also presents different fine scenes of similar character; with somewhat more of intricacy than is common along this coast. One tall pinnacle, perforated by an arch, far detached from the shore, offers a very beautiful and singular object. From Talisker southward, the elevation diminishes, and the Island of Soa contains no attractions of any kind.

This anchorage is rendered somewhat grand by the huge masses of the Cuchullin hills, under which it lies; and it is either from this side, or from the acclivities about

Loch Brittle, that the access to this group is most practicable: in this quarter, at least, since it may also be ascended, as far as human feet can effect that, from the end of Loch Sligachan.

The midges in the Sound of Soa will, however, find full employment, in the absence of all other: being the torment of this country, the mosquitoes of the Highlands. It is the toss up of a die whether the world shall be possessed by midges and gnats, or by man, that Lord of the Universe, whose sword but cuts the air, and whose ordnance thunders in vain on the invisible, invulnerable, unassailable myriads, which, in one short summer, might drive him out of creation. This King of all, who turns the courses of rivers, traverses the pathless and stormy ocean, and weighs the heavens and the earth in its mathematical balance, is foiled by a worm, a fly, is the sport of an invisible insect. That their teeth are sharp, is too well known, and I can answer for the goodness of their noses. We had anchored about a mile and a half from the shore; yet they scented us; and in about a quarter of an hour, the vessel was covered with this "light militia of the lower sky." Considering that the animal is barely visible, his nose cannot be very large: let philosophers, who explain every thing, determine how an odoriferous particle could be projected for a mile and a half, to hit full butt on an olfactory nerve, of which ten thousand might stand, like the schoolmen's angels, on the point of a needle. How also does he perforate the tough hide of a well-bronzed Highlander, with an implement, of which an hundred would not make up the smallest needle that ever was embraced by the fingers of beauty: when man cannot do the same with the strongest metals of the same dimensions; when he cannot indeed, even reduce them to that size. There are not many things more ingenious than the snout of a midge.

SKY. LOCH SCAVIG. CORUISK.

WE have all heard how the mind of a Highlander is elevated by the sublimity of the scenery which surrounds him, how the majesty of the universe inspires him with a sense of the dignity of his own nature, how the spirit of poetry breathes around him from the cloud-capt mountain and the foaming torrent, how the voice of the thunder and the roar of the ocean make him a Fingal, and how the mild breeze of evening, scattering the thistle's beard, exalts him to an Ossian. Honest Donald; he thinks as much about the scenery around him as his cow: the best rig of land and the warmest wintering for his cattle, are to him the picturesque and the sublime. But as I was observed to have an attachment to rocks, I was told that, at Loch Scavig, I should find rocks enough. It was in vain to ask if it was beautiful, or picturesque; was it a bonny place. No, it was as far from bonny as possible; but it "was all rocks upon the top of each other," and was "very big and high," and was only to be got at by sea. All this promised something. Donald's betters knew as little of it as himself; but some had heard the same character of it. At length I found one gentleman, yet he was not of Sky, who had seen it; though I eventually discovered that the proprietor had actually visited it once. Yet this evidence went little further than Donald's; it was all rocks, no grass, "a very rough country," it was not worth the trouble of going so far. In all this, there was not a word but about the sea and Loch Scavig; no hints of a lake, nor of a

valley, nor of mountains, nor of any thing to rouse other curiosity than that of a Geologist. Of course, I dreamed of nothing but Loch Scavig; embodying all sorts of impossible rocks into all sorts of impossible shapes, and, when awake, satisfying myself, that although my creations should all turn out wrong, I should at least see rocks "very rough and very high, on which no grass would grow," and scenery, which, as it appeared to have been utterly neglected by the only two persons who had ever opened their eyes on it, would crown me with the laurels of a discoverer. The Lord of the Isles, it is probable, had not been even projected in those days.

Having reached Gillan, and engaged a boat and a crew in the evening, that I might have the benefit of a long day, I was on the beach at six o'clock in the morning, as the men were appointed to have been. The boat was there, it is true, because I had left her securely moored before I went to bed; and I was too much used to the ways of the world here, to be much surprised to find that there were no men. By nine o'clock, they came straggling down, half awake, and then they began to talk. As usual, the palaver was high and hot, and, probably, as useless as, to me, it was mysterious; being all in the heathen tongue of the country. Like many other councils, it seemed to produce no event, except that, in the mean time, the tide had ebbed away, and the boat was high and dry. They attempted to launch it, but in vain; so that it was necessary to return half a mile to the "toun" for more help. More help produced a fresh palaver; all, probably, tending to know whether the Saxon would pay them something more for their having detained him four hours; for by the time the boat was afloat again, another hour had elapsed. The launch being completed, we found ourselves quite ready for sea; except that, out of the four oars, there were three absent.

Another hour served to procure the complement of oars from certain other boats; and, my exemplary patience being thus at length rewarded, I took my seat in the stern, full of hope, as the day was not yet half done. A third palaver, however, arose, in which the word "putachan" seemed to be preeminent; while the men were fishing with their hands for something that was expected to come out of the dirty water which filled half the boat; forming, in this country, the usual ballast, as not being subject to shift, perhaps. Two rowing pins, where eight should have been, extracted out of this receptacle of all manner of fishiness, explained the clamour about "putachan." If there are trees in Sky, there were none, at least, at Gillan; but still I did not despair, as I knew that a Highlander is never at a loss for an expedient. He has a good-humoured philosophy that is not easily disconcerted; and, accordingly, a harrow was procured, and, a few of its wooden teeth being drawn, we found ourselves stored with the very best of putachans.

At length we were really under way; even the first stroke of the oars had been given, when, as fate willed it, an unlucky breeze sprang up. It was now time to think of despairing; and, though not always of Gonzalo's opinion, in this difficult country, I would have preferred a good many furlongs of the worst moor in Sky, to even an acre of the navigation which I saw impending. It was immediately proposed, of course, to return for a sail; the very evil which I had tried to guard against, by choosing a boat that had neither rudder nor mast, nor even a step for a mast. If all these were not obstacles, what could one feeble "filet" of English voice expect to do against the "gueules" of five Highlanders, all talking at once in an unknown tongue. In a minute we were again on shore, and away they all went to get a sail; while I sat, ignorantly consoling my-

self that they would be unable to rig it when it arrived, and hoping that it would not arrive at all. It did arrive, however, and, what was much worse, it was rigged too. The trunk of a birch tree, not particularly straight, formed the mast, and that, for want of a bolt, was fastened to one of the thwarts with some twine. The yard had been abstracted from a broom or a rake, and was secured in the same manner to the top of the tree; while the sail, made of two narrow blankets, pinned together by wooden skewers, was also skewered round the broomstick. Haulyards, of course, there were none; and as I was wondering whence the sheet and tack were to come, one of the men very quietly stripped the scarlet garters from his chequered stockings, and thus a ship was at length generated, not much unlike those of the heroic ages, the memorials of which still exist in the sculptures of Iona. It was now two o'clock; and, in consequence of this unexampled activity, in seven hours more than a frigate would have required, we were ready for sea.

I knew it was a four hours' row to Loch Scavig: with a fair wind, it would probably be as many days' sail; but I knew too that matters would not be better if I waited a month, and that every to-morrow would be as every to-day, to the last syllable of recorded time. So I took the helm, the oar I should have said, and away we went; rejoicing that the trouble of rowing was at an end, and looking very much like a party of school boys in a washing tub. The wind being right aft for half a mile, we proceeded as boldly down the stream as the Bear in the Boat; but as the breeze drew along shore, it first came upon the quarter and then upon the beam. By degrees, we went to leeward; and then we made nothing but leeway; and then the wind came before the beam, and the separate blankets beginning to disagree, we lay to, upon

a principle as ingenious as it was new to me, then unskilled in Celtic navigation. Dr. Keating's Phenician theory must certainly be wrong. The Queen of the ancient ocean never can have left such a progeny as this. I almost doubt if my own Norwegian one will hold. I explained to the men that whenever we moved we went sideways, and that when we did not go sideways we stood still. But any thing was preferable to rowing; and as long as the wind was blowing the sail about, they were satisfied. "He must have a long spoon, however, that would sup porridge with the deil;" and as neither Saxon authority, Saxon money, nor Saxon arguments, seemed of any avail, the Saxon steersman was obliged to have recourse to a little nautical cunning. A grey squall was just ruffling the water a-head; so I threw the boat up into the wind, brought the sail aback, and the whole apparatus, garters, skewers, blankets, broomstick, and tree, all went overboard. I arrived at Loch Scavig, of course, a little before dark, just in time to put about and return, made fresh vows never to go into a Highland boat again, and spent half the night at sea.

Even from a distance, the aspect of this part of Sky is very striking. The loftiness of the Cuchullin hills, which exceed 3000 feet, renders them no less conspicuous from sea, than their remarkable serrated and bold forms. Blaven, still higher, is equally graceful in the outline; and, as the land stretches away to the eastward, the whole mountain-group of Sky seems to form a continued chain, as diversified in composition as it is rendered remarkable by thus rising immediately out of the water. In approaching nearer, as the spiry summits of Blaven and the Cuchullin increase in height and importance, assuming those forms which we expect only in the Alps and which are so rare in Scotland, their peculiar colour adds greatly to their very bold and striking effect. I noticed formerly,

that, even in the clearest atmosphere, they are marked by a stormy and livid tint; the more conspicuous from its contrast with the pale and reddish hues of the neighbouring mountains. But when, indeed, the atmosphere begins to lour and the clouds collect round their high peaks, a deep abyss appears opened among them, dark, uncertain, and mysterious. But it is in the time of the storm, when wrapt "in whirlwinds and the northern blast," that their effects ought to be seen. It will be the fortune of the traveller, indeed, to see them much oftener thus clothed with the tempest, than projected in all their rugged nakedness on the blue sky. Being the first high land to the westward, they collect every mist as it arrives; and, as the clouds begin to heap themselves round their summits, curling and twisting in all the variety of dim reflected lights, the most tremendous squalls blow from them in every direction, blackening the surface of the sea around, while the neighbouring land is deluged with rain. These effects are frequent, even when all the surrounding country is enjoying fair weather; and thus the Cuchullin becomes the fertile parent of the storms which render this coast so formidable to vessels, and produce almost perpetual winter in the adjoining district of Strathaird.

Sky must indeed be the veritable Isle de Ruach, where the people eat and drink nothing but wind, and live in weather-cocks. Even Edinburgh is a land of vernal zephyrs in comparison. Dr. Johnson remarks, of Coll I believe, that the noise of the wind was all its own. I suppose the Doctor was thinking of Lucretius; "Ventus ut amittit vires, nisi robore densæ occurrunt silvæ," and so on. But Lucretius is right, and the Doctor is wrong; for the noise he heard was that of the wind against the rocks; and if any one is inclined to doubt whether it can make a noise without trees, let him come hither. Here

also *it is esteemed, that he who sleeps* on the top of the Cuchullin will awake a poet; so widely diffused is the tale of the "bicipiti somniasse Parnasso." Be he who he may, he will arise a greater poet than Homer, or even than Ossian or the Laureate; for never yet was the summit scaled, even by the goats; unless that should have happened when they disappear once in the twenty-four hours to get their beards combed, as we are told, by the devil. The upper peaks are mere rocks, and with acclivities so steep and so smooth, as to render all access impossible.

So lofty and rugged are the hills which enclose Loch Scavig, that it is inaccessible by land, except at one point; and there, only to the well-trained shepherds who have the charge of this dreary spot. I made the attempt, not being inexperienced in such adventures; but soon finding myself on the bare face of a smooth rock, far elevated above the deep sea that was rolling below, with nothing but rocks around and overhead, suspended, like Mahomet's tomb, between earth and heaven, I became glad to retreat, before retreat was too late, from a spot where, like Francis the first, I should have probably "lost all but the honour," of breaking my neck. It is preferable to enter on the side of Strathaird; as, on the other quarter, the views are concealed by the huge mass of Garsven. Even in the finest weather and the stillest day, it is not safe to carry a sail here. In an instant, a squall will descend from the mountains, more like the blow of a hammer than a gust of wind; nor is it possible to foresee from what quarter it is to come. In a few minutes it will blow in every possible direction, often perpendicularly downwards; and then, in a moment, as if by magic, all is hushed again, and the blackened sea becomes as smooth as glass. Our general rule was to dip the fore end of the yard under a thwart, one man holding on, while another kept

the after leach in his hand; thus making a sort of small lateen sail that could be taken in in an instant. But even this proved unsafe; the wind, on one occasion, entering the boat, so as to blow the sail up the mast, and nearly upsetting us. This is log-book matter; but it is right that you and others should profit by my experience.

Loch Scavig is a narrow but deep bay, surrounded by lofty and steep mountains which exclude half the light of day; scarcely a mark of vegetation being perceptible on the bare and brown acclivities which rise on all hands, "tutto di pietro e di color ferrigno, come la cerchia che d'intorno volge." We might almost imagine that Dante had visited Scavig. Numerous projecting points and rocky islets vary the scenery; and the extremity is a deep basin, enclosed seawards by promontories and islands, all equally rugged and bare, rising in a solid wall to the height of some hundred feet on the land side; while, above, the high peaks of the mountains tower over the whole. A cascade, foaming down a lofty precipice, is the only object that enlivens this scene of stillness and gloom; the solitude and fixed repose of which are rendered more impressive by this contrast, and by the white wings of the sea fowl silently wheeling above the dark green sea, which, sheltered from the surge, seems, like all the surrounding objects, for ever at rest.

This singular basin affords an anchorage, the most extraordinary perhaps in the world. Embosomed in the midst of high mountains, excluded from the sight of the sea, surrounded with lofty precipices far overtopping the mast, and floating upon the dark and glassy surface, on which not a billow heaves to betray its nature, we seem suddenly transferred to some mountain lake, as if anchored among the ridges of the Alps. On one occasion, I had entered it with my vessel, late in the evening. The clouds were gathering over head, the birds were hastening away to their re-

pose, and, as the twilight thickened, the dark rocks appeared to draw nearer, the mountain tops seemed to approach, and when night at lengh closed in, we felt as if moored in some tremendous cavern of an unknown world, where the light of day was never to break again. All night long I seemed to hear the fall of the cascade, which, alone visible in the gloom, was streaming down in white foam, high over our mast head; the mountains appeared as if falling into the vessel; and when, after a disturbed night, I went on deck, instead of finding the usual open sea, I felt as if I could stretch out my hand and touch the high precipices, which excluded all light but the faint, grey, glimmer of morning as it descended from above. I saw it once a far other scene. The basin was filled with as many vessels as it could well hold, the boats were busied in drawing their nets, fires were lighted on the rocks, and to the bustle and activity of all the busy groups, was added the screaming of ten thousand sea birds which had been attracted by their prey. The contrast thus formed to the deep gloom of that which seemed never before to have been violated by the presence of man, rendered, even more striking, the solemnity of a place, amid the magnitude and tranquillity of which, all this bustle seemed to be but as the turmoil of an ant-hill or the buzzing of the evening gnats.

I had no reason to be disappointed with Loch Scavig. It had amply fulfilled all the promises of rocks by which I had been tempted; and if the notion which I had thought fit to form of its scenery was not accomplished, I had the pleasure of enjoying my own creations and the far different ones of Nature also. Here, as far as my information went, the affair was terminated; and had I pinned my faith on the feelings of Donald for the sublime and beautiful, my expedition would have terminated also. I was told of a cascade abounding in salmon; and there

indeed I found it, foaming in one broad sheet down a face of smooth rock into the sea. But as cascades do not grow out of the ground, I was induced to pursue it; when suddenly, on turning the angle of a high rock, a valley burst on my view, which, in a moment, obliterated Loch Scavig, together with all the records of all the valleys that had ever left their traces on the table of my brain.

The name of this extraordinary place is Coruisk; the water of the hollow, or the hollow of the water, I know not which. As far as I could judge by the time required in walking to the end, it appears about three miles long, and it is from half a mile to a mile wide, forming a somewhat regular prolonged oval. A lake, that seems to be about two miles in length, occupies the middle; its still waters appearing black as jet, from the shadow of the surrounding mountains, and the surface being ornamented by four grassy islands, shining with the brightness of emeralds amid the total absence of other vegetable green. On all sides, the rocky faces of the including mountains rise with a rapid ascent, rude, brown, and bare; not an atom of vegetation being any where discernible, beyond the brown, heathy, rough ground which surrounds the lake and forms the bottom of the valley. Not a blade of grass seems ever to have grown here "since summer first was leafy." So steep and sudden is the acclivity, that, at one glance, you see the whole face of the mountains from the foot to the summit; a continued irregular plane of solid rock, rising upwards on all hands for more than a mile, and presenting a barrier over which there is no egress. So suddenly and unexpectedly does this strange scene break on the view, so unlike is it to the sea bay without, so dissimilar to all other scenery, and so little to be foreseen in a narrow insulated spot like Sky, that I felt as if transported by some magician into the enchanted wilds of an Arabian

tale, carried to the habitations of Genii among the mysterious recesses of Caucasus. I could almost have imagined that it had suggested the idea of the happy valley in Rasselas; but in Johnson's day, even its existence was not suspected. It is nearly as inaccessible as the valley of the poet, though deficient in all its charms: wanting every thing indeed that, in a better climate, might have rendered it the delight, as well as the wonder and admiration, of the world.

The outline on the sky is as picturesque as it is in harmony with the whole scene. The spiry summits of the Cuchullin, now far increased in consequence, tower at one extremity, darkly indenting the blue expanse with their bold serrated forms, and contrasted in other parts with shapes of endless variety. From the height of these mountains and their sudden rise, and from the complete view of them which is attained at one glance, they seem to approach each other and exclude the day; and indeed the sun rarely reaches into the valley, which thus seems lost in a sort of perpetual twilight. It is seldom, besides, that the clouds do not collect round their summits, thus overshadowing the whole with a solemn gloom; while the distant precipices being dimly illuminated by the grey reflected light, the eye vainly endeavours to penetrate the mysterious darkness, picturing to itself various and unseen objects, and an interminable distance.

It is a rugged walk round this valley. The bottom is itself a mixture of heath and bog, with huge insulated rocks, which, in any other place, might be thought hills. A thousand streams incessantly rushing down the mountains, traverse it in all directions to discharge themselves into the lake; and, at every step, some enormous fragment, tumbled down from the precipices, obstructs the way; while many are poised in such a manner on the very edges of the precipitous rocks on which they have

fallen, as to render it difficult to imagine how they could have rested in such places. The presence of snow at the time of their fall, may, perhaps, explain this difficulty. Among them, I found one so exactly balanced, as to form a rocking stone, as moveable as that at the Land's End in Cornwall, and not less bulky.

It was a lovely day when first I found this place; which, excepting the shepherds of Strathaird, mortal foot had scarce ever trod. I was alone. The day was calm, and the water, glassy and dark, reflected one solitary birch, that, unmoved by the slightest air, hung over it from the margin of the green island on which it grew. Not a billow curled on the shore of the black lake, which, like Acheron, seemed as if dead, and fixed in eternal silence. Not even a bird was to be seen, no fish dimpled the water, not a bee nor a fly was on the wing; "non bestia non ucello, non formica non mosca;" it appeared as if all living beings had abandoned this spot to the spirit of solitude. I held my breath to listen for a sound, but every thing was hushed. Neither motion nor sound was there, and I almost startled at that of my own footsteps. The white torrents were foaming down the precipices; but so remote that they seemed not to move; they thundered as they fell, but they were inaudible.

It is not a small part also among the causes of the sublime effect of this scene, that, while it is silent, and vacant, and overwhelming, from its space and dimensions, there is a vagueness in that immensity, the vague of distance, and mistiness, and vacancy, which is in itself powerfully effective in the same manner. The vague, the silent, the vacant, and the infinite, all partake of the same quality; and the impression which they each and all produce, is similar. I have compared the effects of natural scenery with those of purely moral impressions and feelings, on other occasions. How the former acts by

means of the latter, has been well illustrated by many, but by none better than Alison: it is only to be regretted that he stopped so short in his career; leaving to others what he ought to have done, and what he would probably have done better than any. I dare not write essays on such subjects as this, with nothing but the rocks of Sky for a thesis; lest you should think me as bad as the preacher who delivered his sermon on the three words, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego. And therefore I cannot afford to draw this comparison closer. Yet read two passages, quoted by Marmontel, as specimens of that sublimity which is derived from the vagueness and immensity of the images, and see, you who have seen Coruisk, whether you cannot trace the connexion for yourself, and save me half a page of metaphysics, now that pages are becoming precious. It is the Pére La Ruë who says of the sinner after his death; "environné de l'éternité, et n'ayant que son péché entre son Dieu et lui." The same truly elegant critic quotes, and to the same purpose, the answer of an anchorite, who says, "cogitavi dies antiquos, et annos æternos in mente habui."

If I have named Alison, to regret that he had not pursued his subject further, we may also express regret, and perhaps surprise, that he should have almost passed over the subject of Silence; and that Burke should equally have neglected it, as if unaware of its rank among the sources of the Sublime. This writer, though professing to treat of all the causes of beauty and sublimity, bestows scarcely a passing word on Silence; while he explains its effects by the production of simple terror, as he does that of darkness. I took occasion, formerly, to make some casual remarks on a subject brought before me by the scenery of Glen Sanicks; and endeavoured to point out under what modifications or adjuncts, Silence was a

source of the Sublime. If it has been overlooked by these, and by almost all the metaphysical writers equally, assuredly the poets have known its value and its power. The passages which I then quoted, were not written without the feeling with which they are read. The reception which the shade of Dido gives to Æneas, has indeed been often noticed by the critics: and that Virgil knew the power of Silence and its associated images, is proved by his mention of the "umbræ silentes," and of the "loca nocte, silentia latè." That he had also united it, in his own mind, with vacuity and space, as it is in the scene which has led to these remarks, and had studiously combined all these images to produce one great effect, is shown by his describing his hero as proceeding, amid this silence and obscurity, "per domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna." It is the very description of Coruisk itself; which wanted nothing but the spirits which my seamen feared, to render it perfect. In the vision of Job, silence is awfully used to heighten the sublimity and terror of the impression: and the "still small voice" in the vision of Elijah, seems to produce its effect, chiefly by its contrast with that awful silence which there follows the whirlwind and the earthquake; by rendering more impressive the horror of that fearful stillness which succeeds to the ravages of the elements. "Magnusque per omnes, errabat sinè voce dolor," says Luçan, comparing the terror of Rome to the silence of the house of mourning, "cùm corpora nondum conclamata jacent," and "funere primo attonitæ tacuere domus." If the silence of grief be sublime, it is as that of anger. "The veil of Timanthes is the sublime of thought," says Marmontel, "because it is a grief which finds no words." Is this not rather another case in illustration of the same views. But it is time for me to be silent myself, or you will think that I have forgotten Coruisk in this metaphysical chase.

Yet I must still quote one passage from Pinto: though, quoting it from memory, I cannot vouch for its accuracy. "Both the ships had been struggling with the storm, through the darkness of the night; nothing could be seen; but on a sudden there arose a fearful cry, when, in a moment, all was *silent*, and nothing was ever heard again but the sound of the waves and the gale."

Never was any thing more deceptive than the first sight of this valley. Simple in its form and disposition, admirably proportioned in all its parts, and excluding other objects of comparison, it appeared about a mile in length, and the lake seemed not to exceed a few hundred yards. But when I looked at that solitary birch tree, a mere speck in the void, when I saw a hundred torrents, which, though they almost seemed within my reach, I could not hear, when I viewed the distant extremity, dimly showing through the soft grey of the atmosphere, and when, as I advanced, the ground, that seemed only strewed with pebbles, was found covered with huge masses of rock, far overtopping myself, I felt like an insect amidst the gigantic scenery, and the whole magnitude of the place became at once sensible.

Still, the effect thus produced by this simplicity of form, appeared almost inexplicable; but it has, indeed, been explained by Gulliver. When I contemplated the valley only, every thing seemed very natural; but I felt diminished to an insignificance of dimension, less than that of his own Lilliputians. But when again I was convinced that I was myself, and no other, then the giant forms grew around me, and every thing became vast and terrible. I was glad afterwards to take my own boat's crew with me for a perpetual scale, despatching them in a string towards the further end of the lake. The further end—before they had reached half way to the nearer extremity, they were all invisible.

We set out at length to walk round it; we advanced; still we advanced; but still the distant boundary was as grey and as misty as before. The forms remained unchanged, the lake was the same, the rocks varied not, the mountain summit did not subside. The men began to think they were enchanted, and that, after half an hour's walking, they had not moved from the spot; but, on turning round, we found we had left the entrance far behind, though the termination was as distant as ever. We proceeded for an hour, and still it was unchanged: growing on all hands, as if it expanded before our efforts to measure it, and still retiring as fast as we advanced. My rough fellows, little given to metaphysical reasonings, did not well know whether to be frightened or astonished: they looked at each other, and at me, and around, and I found, in the course of the evening, that they considered the place as "no canny."

At the upper extremity, where we at length rounded the lake, the scene became somewhat changed. Still the western barrier was grey, and misty, and distant. Here, the sun had never shone since the creation; and a thousand reflected lights, mingling with the aerial tints, gave a singular solemnity to the huge irregular masses which now rose over head, deeply cleft by the torrents, that were now at length audibly foaming down the black precipices, and which, gradually diminishing till they were lost in the misty mountain summit, seemed to have their sources in the invisible regions of the clouds.

There is a singular contrast in the views from the two extremities of this valley. The eastern being most open, it seems at all times of the day to announce the rising of the sun; while, in looking toward the western end, we feel as if it had long been set. Thus, when in the middle, on looking alternately at each, the break of a bright day is contrasted with the twilight gloom of evening. It is

when evening has actually come on, that the western end seems involved in the deepest shadows of night; while, from the contrast, the day still seems bright over the entrance of the valley.

Wishing to witness the effect of night, and finding the men unwilling to risk themselves in this enchanted ground, I left them with the boat, and ascended the eastern hill as far as it was accessible. The clouds of evening soon began to settle over the Cuchullin and to overshadow the valley, which now extended in all its length beneath me; no longer deceiving, but deep, broad, and distant. As cloud after cloud continued to arrive from the western sea, their huge leaden masses began to curl round the mountain top, and the whole was soon involved in one mysterious shadow, concealing entirely those forms which even the morning light had but dimly shown. The glassy surface of the lake still served to define its figure; and a few livid lights, reflected from the overhanging curtain of clouds, tinging the nearer shores and promontories by which it was bounded, conducted the eye gradually on to the place where all objects at length disappeared, and beyond which the valley seemed interminably prolonged into the regions of endless night.

When I returned to the boat, I found it moored against the rocks; but the men were gone. It was now nearly dark. The mountains were all confounded in undistinguishable blackness, and their outlines alone were discernible on the dark grey sky. It was in vain to call where there were none to hear; it was impossible to seek after the men, as I could no longer find my way among those deep shadows where some chasm or cavern seemed to open at every step; and to carry off the boat alone, was out of the question. I sat down on the rock, watching the waves that curled against it, and listened to the

sound of the distant cascade of Scavig, which, coming by fits on the breeze, rendered the universal silence more impressive. At length three of the men appeared: they had gone in search of me, fearing that I was lost; and it was easy to see, by their joy at finding me, that they had been under considerable alarm. I had forgotten that the lake was considered the haunt of the Water Demons; but I was soon reminded of it by the arrival of the fourth man, who came back shortly after, running as if the Kelpie had been at his heels. It was not till he found himself once more in the boat, that he seemed to consider himself safe. "Ech!" said he, as he came to his breath again, "this is an awfu-like place." We discovered that he had taken fright when he found himself left alone, and that, leaving the boat to its fate, he had set out to seek his companions. As we rowed back to our vessel, I observed an unusual silence and air of mystery among the men; while they pulled as if an enemy had been behind them, looking about at every moment, and then at each other, till, as we gained the opener sea, their terrors seemed to disappear. But as I paced the deck afterwards, I overheard much serious and fearful talk; in which was distinguishable, among some praises of my courage, no small wonder at the incredulity of the infidel Southron in thus venturing alone among the spirits of Coruisk.

In spite of all my patriotic attempts, I suspect that the knowledge of this place is still limited to half a dozen persons exclusive of yourself and me. But as travellers become more adventurous, and as Englishmen discover that the people of Sky have the usual proportion of legs and arms, it will become known. Then the loungers and the what-thens will return angry and disappointed; dinnerless, per chance, and dry within, and wet without; grumbling at their guide, complaining that it is nothing

like what they expected, with much more such a matter as I have often heard and expect again to hear. Then I may answer, but not in my own words, "Since you decry my account, why did you not write it yourself."

If you said that these mountains consisted of "granite and plum pudding rock," you need not care though I contradict you; since this is not your trade, my good Sir Walter, as it is mine. "Pish," said Queen Elizabeth, when a dancing master's excellence was proposed as an exhibition, "I will not see him, 'tis his profession." I have no merit, therefore, in saying that they are all formed of Hypersthene rock; and how should you know any thing of Hypersthene rock, when I was obliged to invent the term myself. But then I must claim the merit of having discovered a new rock before inventing a new name; and I suppose that even the Virgin Queen would have condescended to praise the hero of the kit, if he had contrived a new pirouette, or found a way of doing with one leg what his predecessors had done with two. Nature would have committed an error had she not made a place unlike to all the world, of a rock unlike every other. I leave you to guess what an addition this double discovery made to my happiness; though I have since found the same substance in Airdnamurchan. As to our learned Queen, I hold with her, even against my own interests. We hear every day of such a man being a great lawyer, and of such another as a great preacher, fidler, physician, and so on. If the century produces one Greek scholar, he is exalted as high as the Golden Calf, and the world forgets to say "Pish, 'tis his profession." What matters it that the pedagogue, who has been employed, daily and all day long, full forty years, verberating hic hæc hoc into the inferior sensorium of his unlucky and successive generations of pupils, understands Cordery or the Anthology better than he who has been go-

verning States or keeping "the reckonings of a tapster." "'Tis his profession." What command over the world's praise has the Mathematician, who has passed his forty years also, in the Teacher's chair. "'Tis his professi on." If a Chancellor could dance like Vestris indeed, or rival Vickery in the manufacture of his own wig, that would be matter worthy of a statue. The man who is not a good Dancer or a Greek scholar, profes sing to be one, and living by the trade, ought to be hanged. There is abundance of demerit in the want, but wondrous little honour in knowing a trade and performing a duty. But the race of the Porsons is praised for its Greek, as only you and I ought to be, if we had tacked that supererogatory work to our law, poetry, geology, and physic. Such is the justice of the world.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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